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The Little Town that Could

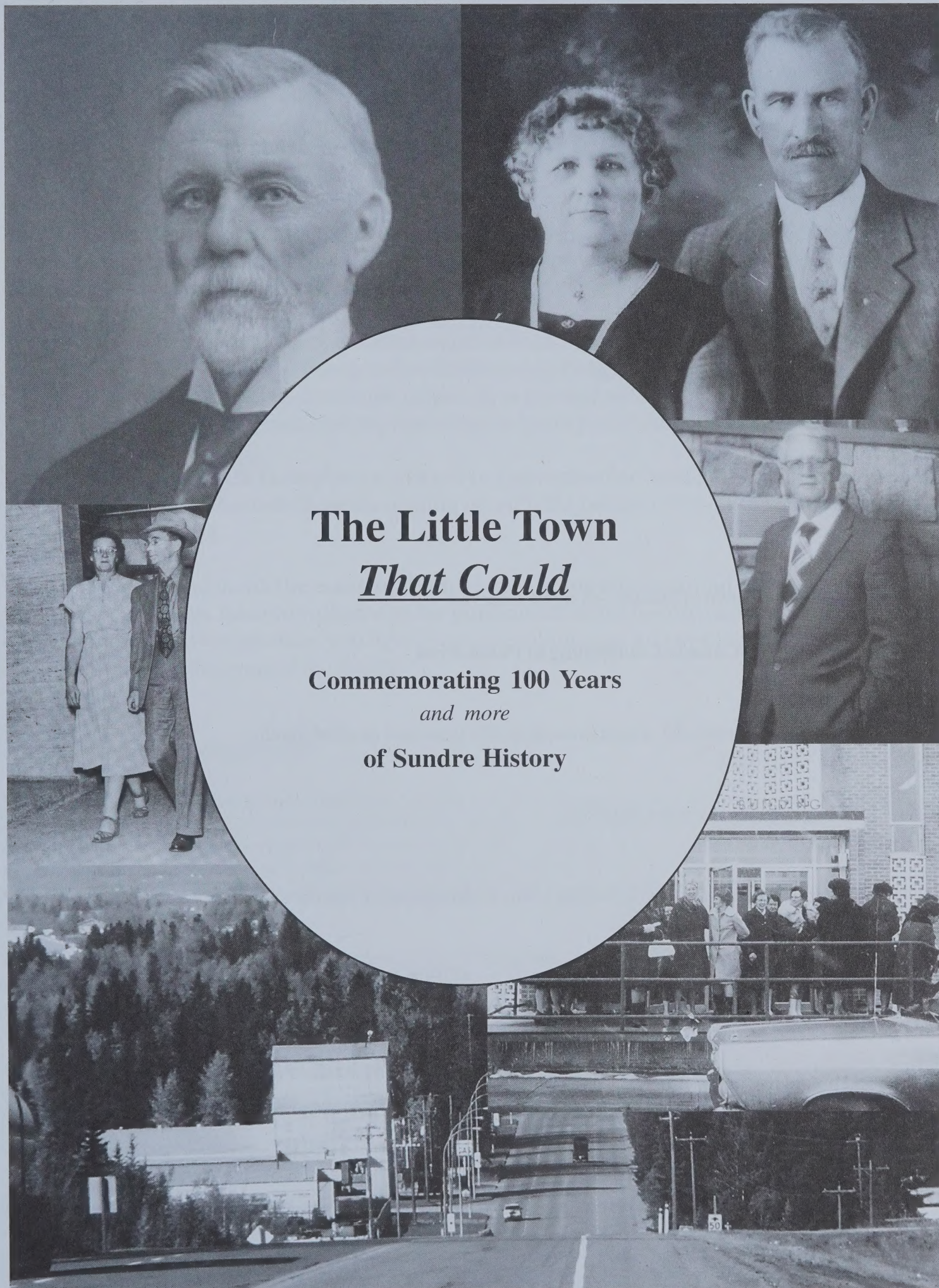




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The Little Town
That Could

Commemorating 100 Years
and more
of Sundre History

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Town of Sundre Acknowledgements:

In 2009, as Sundre celebrates its 100th Anniversary as an official community, the Town of Sundre pays tribute to all those individuals and organizations in the past who, through their hard work, dedication and vision, contributed to the vibrant community we all enjoy today.



We extend our appreciation and thanks to **Alberta Historical Resources Foundation – Heritage Preservation Partnership Program** for awarding us the research and publishing grants that helped us to proceed with and complete this project, and for their commitment to preserving the history of all Alberta communities.

Thank you also to **Marcia Humphreys & Marilyn Halvorson** for the many hours of editing and proof reading, and to **Annette Rose** for coming up with the perfect title for a book about the challenges of Sundre's past.

We acknowledge and thank **the many individuals and groups** living in and around Sundre who, in many special ways, have contributed to the publication of this history book. With your knowledge, memories and cooperation, you have given our community a connection to the past that will endure through all the years of the future.

Author's Acknowledgements:

Writing Sundre's History has been an inspiring, exciting, and very satisfying experience for me and I couldn't have done it without the generous assistance of many individuals. With a book such as this, the author is merely an instrument through which the people record their stories and it has given me great pleasure to spend the past two years collecting and recording your stories of Sundre's past. So many of you have welcomed me into your homes, offering me the same hospitality and warmth that your pioneering parents and grand-parents brought to this district so many years ago.

I have included the names of all contributors in the Bibliography at the back of this book. Those who have contributed in a major way have been included in a special photo section. I hope all of you will accept my most grateful thanks for the various ways that you have shared your knowledge, your memories and your photographs. I have learned from you and have very much enjoyed the experience.

My special thanks are extended to the 2004-2007 Town of Sundre Council and Staff for recognising the importance of having an extensive written record of Sundre's history and for granting me the privilege of writing it.

Sincerely, Daryl M. Smith

Note: Most photographs without credits are the property of the author.

Disclaimer:

In a book such as this, both the writer and the reader must, to some degree, take a leap of faith regarding the accuracy of the stories passed down from those who were part of the past. Many of these people are no longer alive to validate the exactness of events, dates and names, and so we must accept that in some instances there may be discrepancies. Also, different people remember the same event in different ways, based on their own perceptions and beliefs. Descendants of the “old-timers” rely on the stories that were passed down to them for their facts and, as with any story that is passed down through the generations, important elements sometimes get lost or altered.

While I have done my best to authenticate as much of the information I have gathered as is possible, in many instances I cannot guarantee the exactness of an account. In the course of researching the early days of Sundre for this book, I have come across several instances where there are conflicting reports of the same situation and I have no way of knowing which one is correct – perhaps, in their own way – they all are.

I hope you will enjoy reading about Sundre’s one hundred-plus years of history, but do keep in mind that to a large degree history is told through the stories of those who lived it. Beyond the bona fide official records, documents and photographs, we must allow those whose eyes and ears witnessed the events to be our guides.



A Message From The Mayor

2009 is a very special year for Sundre and area as it marks one hundred years since the community's founder, N.T. Hagen, opened a post office from his rustic little store and named the tiny hamlet after his hometown in Norway.

The first settlers in the Sundre area were resilient, hard working and innovative. They came from all walks of life and a variety of different cultures and proceeded to devote their lives to their families, their homesteads and to the future of the area. It is because of these men and women, their children and their grandchildren, that we all live in such a very special community today. These early pioneers, and all those who have come after them, have endowed us all with a rich and exciting past, a secure and stable present and a very promising future.

I have never thought of Sundre as a town with distinct boundaries separating it from the surrounding areas. To me, the Sundre community encompasses not just the physical town but the entire rural area around it as well. Sundre people are not just the residents who pay taxes to the Town, but all the people from the outlying areas who call the community home; people who shop, work and play here, and who devote numerous hours to the activity on which Sundre's greatest strengths were built - volunteerism.

Throughout its history as a little off-the-tracks community in the west, Sundre has often struggled for recognition and yet despite this, or perhaps because of it, it has frequently proved itself to be a trailblazer. Sundre is one of very few communities anywhere that can boast that, almost without exception, all its major recreational and cultural facilities have been built without the help of local taxpayer dollars: The Curling Rink (1st and 2nd), the Arena, the Golf Course, the Arts Centre, and the Aquatic Centre were all built by dedicated volunteers and the generosity of Sundre and area residents. The Sundre Library was started in the late 1940s by a group of women with vision. The Volunteer Fire Service, founded in the mid-fifties, is a credit to the community and is still a volunteer organization five decades later; when the Sundre Ambulance Service was started in 1982 it was second to none and it set the standard for many of those that followed in other towns; Sundre led the way to the future with the introduction of its major Recycling Program some years back, and it was the children of the community, students of the Sundre Schools, who initiated it.

Over the years, many organizations, groups and individuals have devoted themselves to making Sundre a great place to live. Whatever has been needed in this town, the people of Sundre and area have always found a way to provide it. I feel very proud to live in a community filled with so many warm, hospitable and dedicated people.

On behalf of the Town of Sundre, it gives me great pleasure to introduce this history book, so aptly titled, "The Little Town That Could", and to wish Sundre and area residents a Very Happy 100th Birthday!

Roy Cummings

Table of Contents:

Page

1890 - 1949

The Little Engine That Could.....	1
Significant Dates.....	2
The Stoney Indians.....	3
1890 Some Early Pioneers.....	4
1890 Harry Graham.....	28
1893 David McDougall.....	30
1895 Grizzly Bear Story.....	34
Remittance Men.....	35
1905 The Lumber Industry.....	36
1905 Ralph Ellithorpe/Sundre Transport.....	41
1905 Early Schools.....	44
1905 Teaching at the Turn of the 20 th Century.....	45
1908 Bridges.....	46
1909 N.T. Hagen.....	49
1911 Bow Crow Forest.....	56
1911 Jack Morgan.....	57
1912 Trevor Morgan.....	60
1913 Charlie Hodges.....	61
1914 WWI.....	62
1915 Sundre Creamery.....	63
1915 Early Newspapers.....	66
1915 Sundre Cemetery.....	68
1916 Prohibition.....	68
1917 Sundre School Fair.....	69
1917 Sundre Women's Institute.....	70
1920 Funny Stories.....	71
1920 Rodeo Beginnings.....	72
1922 The Miessner House.....	75
1928 Sundre Meat Market.....	75
1929 Jack and Lillian McGonigal.....	77
1930 The Dirty Thirties.....	80
1933 First Sidewalk.....	81
1934 John Macleod.....	81
1935 Knott's Trading Post.....	85
1939 Burke's Lumber.....	88
1939 WWII.....	91
1941 Sundre Motors.....	93
1942 Sundre Schools.....	96
1942 Sundre Thrift Shop.....	102
1943 Electricity.....	105
1945 Sundre Gospel Centre.....	106
1945 Sundre United Church.....	107
1945 Sundre War Brides.....	110
1946 Doctor Chauncy Miller.....	115

1946 Sundre Legion.....	116
1947 Sundre Church of the Nazarene.....	118
1947 Rod Macloed.....	119
1947 Vennard's Store.....	121
1948 Sundre Feed Mill.....	124
1948 Russ Greenwood.....	125
1949 Lund's Jewellery.....	129
1949 Sundre Library.....	130
1949 Snippetts from the First Half of the Century.....	131
Memories Photo Album To 1950.....	133
 1950 – 2007	
1950 Foreword.....	138
Significant Dates.....	140
1950 The Village of Sundre.....	141
1950 Sundre Fire Department.....	142
1950 Sundre Elks Club.....	143
1951 Sundre Business Advertisers.....	144
1951 Sundre Airport.....	144
1951 Sundre Curling Rink.....	146
1951 Sundre Mutual Telephone Company.....	147
1952 Flood.....	149
1953 Sundre Theatre.....	149
1953 Chamber of Commerce.....	152
1954 Oil Discovery.....	154
1954 Policing.....	159
1955 Faith Lutheran Church.....	161
1955 Ladies of the Royal Purple.....	161
1955 Sundre Hotel.....	162
1956 Town of Sundre.....	166
1956 Corral Cafe.....	177
1957 4-H Beef Club.....	179
1957 Newsmakers.....	180
1960 Newsmakers.....	181
1960 Marketplace	181
1960 Sundre Round Up.....	182
1961 Archie McKechnie.....	185
1961 Newsmakers.....	186
1961 Natural Gas Installation.....	187
1962 Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Church.....	187
1962 Newsmakers.....	189
1963 Newsmakers.....	189
1964 Newsmakers.....	189
1965 Doctor Alan White.....	190
1965 Newsmakers.....	194
1965 Flood.....	196
1966 Newsmakers.....	198

1966 Sundre Golf Course.....	199
1967 Hospital Auxiliary.....	200
1967 Newsmakers.....	202
1968 Sundre Hospital.....	204
1968 Myron Thompson MP.....	210
1968 Newsmakers.....	212
1968 Sundre Museum.....	213
1969 Newsmakers.....	215
1970 Newsmakers.....	216
1971 Sundre Agricultural Society.....	216
1971 St. Cuthbert and St. George Anglican Church.....	217
1971 Newsmakers.....	217
1972 Sundre Lions Club.....	218
1972 Sundre Arena.....	218
1974 Newsmakers.....	222
1975 Newsmakers.....	222
1975 Sundre Congregation Jehovah's Witnesses.....	223
1975 Pioneer Veterinary Services.....	223
1977 Mount View Health Unit.....	229
1977 Newsmakers.....	230
1978 Flood Control.....	231
1980 West Country Centre.....	232
1981 Peak Theatre Players.....	233
1982 Sundre Ambulance.....	234
1982 Dr. Hal Irvine.....	235
1987 Sunpine Forest Products.....	238
1989 Curling Rink (2nd).....	240
1992 Search and Rescue.....	241
1992 Sundre Petroleum Operators Group.....	243
1997 Sundre Garden Club.....	245
2001 Sundre & District Aquaplex.....	246
2005 Sundre Flood.....	250
2006 Snake Hill.....	255
Snippets from the Second Half of the Century.....	257
Memories Photo Album After 1950.....	263

The Present and the Future

Business Listings.....	267
Groups and Organizations.....	270
Sundre Stats.....	271
The Future.....	272
Sundre Poem.....	274
Colour Photos.....	275
Black & White Photos.....	283
Contributer's Photos.....	294
Bibliography.....	295
Index.....	302

Sundre

Sundre is a bit of heaven fallen from
Among the stars,
And the settlers, scarce believing, look to
Visitors to Mars.
But they daily scratched the surface
And they scattered for their grain,
For they knew that they could purchase
Goods wherewith life to sustain.
Sundre's by the Red Deer River,
Watered by its crystal stream,
The goddess, Ceres, did deliver
Crops beyond those, as yet, seen.
Soon the plains were stocked with cattle,
Also flocks of sheep were there,
Cowboys oft their spurs did rattle
As they galloped everywhere.
Homes they built among the woodlands
And beside the Red River,
Cultivating all the good lands
As they worked on their endeavour.
Stout of heart and strong of muscle,
They continued in their task,
Mother Nature in the tussle
Seemed to furnish all they'd asked.
Bridges built across the river
Saved them from a dangerous ford,
And thus making crossing safer,
Linked them to the outside world.
N.T. Hagen, blyth and airy,
Was the next upon the ground
To supply the necessary,
In his store all things were found.
As the mail came pouring westward,

A P.O. was the next in line
And the question was a test word,
Whose guess is it – yours or mine?
What to name it was the question
Now debated day by day,
Hagen said, "We'll call it Sundre –
My hometown in dear Norway."
Village? – Now a town is chartered,
It appears upon the map.
In the hands of Mayor and Council
It is safe from all mishap.
Stores, and merchants of high rating
Schools to educate our youth,
Churches too for regulating
Conducts into ways of truth.
Oil wells have made their appearance,
Proving a new source of wealth,
Modern plumbing makes a clearance
Of a menace unto health.
So we grow, and keep on growing,
May we keep high ends in view,
What may happen, there's no knowing –
It is partly up to you.
May we still be proud of Sundre
As the years and days go by;
It's a little bit of heaven
That has fallen from the sky.
- Vulcanus

*Vulcanus was the name of a regular column
written by J.R. Jackson in the early years of the
Sundre Round Up.*

Foreword

The Wild Frontier

Imagine looking down from the brow of a steep hill over a lush green valley that is etched by winding rivers and streams that are so pristine and clear they are almost blinding in the reflected sunlight. Tracts of lush natural grassland run along the banks of the tumbling waterways and expand over the flatlands towards the western rise, where the Rocky Mountain foothills blend into the shadows of the majestic snow-capped peaks beyond. Eagles soar over the gently rolling landscape that is scattered with stands of immature spruce and pine; moose and deer forage in the lush green willows along the banks of the creeks.

A small band of Stoney Indians is camped on the western banks of a rushing river. They are hunters and their families, and they are following the traditions set by their ancestors thousands of years before. Foaming white water tumbles over rocks and rapids as it carves its way northeastward towards the Canadian prairies. The small circle of tipis, constructed of animal hides that are bleached almost white by sun and frost and painted with the picture stories of a culture very different from our own, contrasts sharply against the green of the trees and the deep blue of the western Canadian sky. Smoke curls lazily upwards from the small cooking fires and a few recently unburdened horses snatch eagerly at the thick grass around the edges of the camp.

Many a new settler, weary after weeks of difficult travel, pulled his team of oxen or horses to a halt and paused to gaze across this fertile valley, filling his eyes and his soul with the incredible beauty of the scene before him, knowing that he had, at last, found his home.

Alberta was not yet a province when the first white settlers began to trickle onto the lands reaching along the banks of the Red Deer River. The river, which originates at Red Deer Lakes and Drummond Glacier in Banff National Park, flows across south-central Alberta, traversing the Front Range of the Rocky Mountains, the Foothills, the Boreal Forest, the Parkland and the Prairies before joining the South Saskatchewan River, which lies some 744 kilometres distant.

In the winter of 1754, Hudson Bay Company's Anthony Henday became the first recorded white man to cross the Red Deer River. Some years later, between 1787 and 1807, David Thompson criss-crossed and canoed it many times, contributing greatly to the mapping of the braided river. Missionaries would follow in the footsteps of the early explorers, amongst them, George and John McDougall.

Permanent settlement on the banks of the Red Deer River did not begin until 1882 – nine years after the formation of the North West Mounted Police; three years before the North West Rebellion and five years before the first long distance telephone call was made in the Northwest Territories. As part of the Northwest Territories, the area that would become Alberta was still considered by the more settled eastern provinces to be a wild and desolate frontier. A mere fifty or sixty years earlier, in 1830, millions of buffalo had still roamed the Alberta plains. By the 1880's, the demand for buffalo furs for Europe by the Hudson Bay Company, along with the growing requirement for land development for farming, resulted in the extinction of these mighty animals, which had been a vital part of the Plains Indian culture for thousands of years. This loss of one of their main sources of food, clothing and shelter caused extreme hardship for the First Nations people and many were on the brink of starvation when Treaty Seven, a peace treaty between the Blackfoot Confederacy and Her Majesty the Queen, was signed in 1877.

The village of Olds was established in 1896, a natural consequence of the arrival of the railway; the combined areas of Fort Edmonton and Greater Edmonton had a population of 150 by 1897 and that number only began to swell as the Klondike Gold Rush took hold in 1898.

A weekly stagecoach ran between Edmonton and its southerly neighbour, Calgary. Like

Edmonton, Calgary was also in its infancy and was once referred to by an Ontario visitor as a “dump” after he saw a cow tethered in the middle of a downtown slough.

Sir Wilfrid Laurier was not yet Prime Minister of Canada but had re-entered politics at the time of the Riel Rebellion in 1885; the Red Ensign was Canada’s flag and, in its various adaptations, it would remain so until 1965.

In the late 1880’s, much of the West Country was on the brink of a serious drought that would prevail for almost a decade and, because of this, few settlers were venturing into the rural areas. Those who did were slowly making their way further west towards the foothills, where frequent summer thunderstorms rolled in from the mountains, and numerous creeks and rivers helped compensate for the lack of spring rains.

When signs of the coming drought first appeared, the George McDougall family had been serving the mission they established on the Stoney Indian Reserve at Morleyville (Morley) for almost twenty years. Morleyville was close to the borders of what we know today as the Banff National Park, and the McDougalls’ presence there had been the result of a direct request to John McDougall by legendary Stoney Chief and Warrior, Jacob Bearspaw.

It would be John’s brother, David, who would make a claim on land that included the holdings where Sundre is now located. As the drought began to take its toll, he realized that the sparse, dry grasslands around Morley were not adequate to feed the family’s growing herd of cattle. An Indian trader, whose route took him through the fertile valleys to the north of Morley, en route to the settlement of Rocky Mountain House, had told David of an area along the banks of an untamed river where, even in dry years, the grass grew thick and green and wild game was abundant. Journeying to see this area for himself, David realized the potential it presented for a good life and livelihood and in 1893 he began to develop a homestead on land on which the modern Town of Sundre now stands.

While David McDougall is certainly considered a pivotal figure in Sundre’s history and can certainly be credited as being one of its two main founding fathers, he was not the first settler in the general area. In 1890, Harry Graham began working land that would eventually become known as the Red Deer River Ranches – still an extensive and successful working cattle ranch today. David McDougall arrived from Morley three years after Mr. Graham, but his legacy to the community we know today lay in the fact that he built his home and store on land which would form the town site of Sundre. Two years after David’s arrival here, the Niddrie, Fletcher and Coleman families, also from Morley, set up homesteads a few miles north of the McDougall homestead in the area that would become Derbytown.

Perhaps those early settlers could not have imagined it then, but the southern North West Territories were soon to lose their reputation as a ‘wild frontier’. A wave of pioneers was gradually making its way westward, aided and encouraged by the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway in 1885. Free land was being offered by the government to encourage settlement and so, with very little money and a lot of faith, courageous individuals began to cross the Atlantic Ocean and Canada’s vast prairie landscape, unsure of what to expect but determined to make a new home in the Canadian West. At the same time, our American neighbours to the south were beginning to cross the border into Western Canada, prompted by tales of great opportunities and, like all pioneers, searching for the elusive “better life” that most of us, at some time, have dreamed of having.

Sundre:

Growth, sometimes survival itself, was often a struggle for the little community where Harry Graham and David McDougall planted the first seeds of human settlement. There would be numerous challenges to development over the early years of Sundre’s history, and several periods of apparent stagnation, verging on decline. Floods and fires were almost as predictable as snow in winter, but

these were not the greatest threats to the hamlet. In the early years, from 1893 to 1907, McDougall owned thousands of acres of land throughout the area. From the McDougall crossing, where the Sundre Bridge is today, his land stretched for miles to the west and south. He was not interested in development; he was a rancher, and his land was used to house and feed his vast herds of cattle. Consequently, those settlers beginning to trickle onto the lands west of the Big Red were not able to stake claims on territory immediately surrounding what is now Sundre. Instead, they were forced to look several miles to the north for places to set up their homesteads. This resulted in the early development of Derbytown, a hamlet that would soon expand to become the heart of the district, serving the surrounding homesteads and settlements with a creamery, an early store, church services and, eventually, a small newspaper. It was only when David McDougall sold his holding to Sundre's founder, N.T. Hagen and his partner, a Mr. Lee, in 1907 that development here became more of a possibility. Unlike his predecessor, Mr. Hagen *was* a land developer, as well as a shrewd businessman, and it didn't take long for him to promote growth in the area through his land sales. This resulted in a large enough population to facilitate the opening of a post office and, consequently, the naming of the hamlet in 1909. Even so, Derbytown, already established as the hub of the area, continued to thrive, thwarting Sundre's chances for significant business expansion.

A major flood in 1915, which devastated both communities, became the catalyst that changed the course of local history. The Niddrie Fletcher Bridge, which by 1915 was known as the Rockwood Bridge, was an essential element of Derbytown's accessibility, and its vitality. Like the McDougall Bridge in Sundre, it was destroyed by the 1915 floodwaters. Unlike the bridge in Sundre, it was not replaced. The creamery in Derbytown was flooded then too, and then sold and moved to Sundre, sounding a double death knoll for the plucky little hamlet six miles downstream.

The acquisition of the creamery and the construction of a new, sturdier iron-span bridge, assured Sundre of a fighting chance of survival. The hamlet continued to develop, if slowly. Mr. Hagen sold building lots to his American acquaintances, and to others who travelled to Olds, and then west, looking for a place to put down roots. By the early 1940's, when N.T. Hagen was well into his seventies and had for many years been living back in the USA, he returned to visit the hamlet he had founded. He must have felt considerable pride to see how the little community had grown from a few dozen residents in 1909 to several hundred in 1942. By 1945, as the Second World War came to an end, the population had increased even more and a flurry of new businesses were starting up. The future looked good for Sundre at that point, so good in fact that by 1950 the hamlet experienced a boost in status when it was officially registered as a village. Despite this new designation, there were to be some tough years ahead: N.T. Hagen died in 1945 and, because there was no will, his estate, which included a great deal of land in and around Sundre, was frozen. This had a substantial impact on Sundre's residential and business development. So much land was tied up in the estate that successive village and town councils were forced to juggle the need to promote growth with the reality of a lack of developable land. It was not until the late 60's that this land, located mostly to the north of downtown, was freed up, enabling the Town to purchase it for future development.

The oil boom, which hit Sundre in the mid 1950s, proved to be the most important contributor to the stability of the community's future. Industries related to agriculture and lumber had played a huge role in the district's ability to survive the tough times, but it would be oil and gas development that brought the possibility of ongoing prosperity and growth to the area.

Even after Sundre became a town in 1956, and even though its future was looking much more secure by that time, in many ways the community and its residents still struggled. The town's idyllic location in the West Country, where the terrain climbs gradually into the foothills and then the mountains, had always attracted those who sought tranquillity amidst nature's bounty. Those who lived in and around the fledgling town knew that they shared a special place. Somewhat off the

beaten track and unspoiled by the sprawl of the larger centres, Sundre was a close-knit community, but certainly not a closed one. Strangers were welcomed here; people cared about each other and were always willing to lend a hand and, when necessary, to draw together as a group to bring important services and facilities to the town. Unfortunately, it was often the very things that made Sundre special; its semi-isolation and “end of the road” location, that caused it to take a back seat to the needs of other towns in the area. Olds, located thirty-seven kilometres to the east, was a larger, more established community, and Sundre’s closest neighbour. Naturally it did not want to see its own growth slowed by substantial development in the little town to the west. Many Sundre area people shopped in Olds, utilized its medical facilities and made use of its recreational venues. This would change if Sundre became more self-sufficient. And so, at times, the town of Olds was far from encouraging when Sundre sought to improve itself. A case in point is Sundre’s crusade for its own hospital in the 1960’s. A hospital in Sundre would directly affect the admittance levels of the Olds hospital, and so the larger town urged against it at every opportunity.

It wasn’t just the surrounding towns, though, that appeared to try and keep Sundre from growing. The County of Mountain View, now Mountain View County, and the Town of Sundre seemed, in the past, to be at odds with each other on many issues, a lot of them revolving around recreation grants and facilities. The County also opposed a hospital for Sundre and had it not been for the unrelenting persistence of Sundre and area residents and officials, it would not have been built in 1968.

Despite frequently feeling ignored, and sometimes invisible, the little community on the banks of the Red Deer River never gave up on itself. The more opposition there was to its growth, the harder it fought for recognition; the more its needs were casually swatted away - the more persistent it became. There is little doubt that, at times, Sundre was looked upon as an annoying, relentlessly buzzing mosquito by the neighbouring towns, the County, and even the Provincial Government. But it caused an itch that refused to quit and consequently – eventually - its image in the eyes of those who opposed its growth began to change. Sundre, at times considered to be a little hick town in the backwoods, came of age, proving itself a strong and worthy community. Like “The Little Engine That Could”, Sundre, with the cooperation and determination of its people, became “The Little Town That Could”.

The Little Engine That Could by Watty Piper

A little steam engine had a long train of cars to pull.

She went along very well till she came to a steep hill. But then, no matter how hard she tried, she could not move the long train of cars.

She pulled and she pulled. She puffed and she puffed. She backed and started off again. Choo! Choo! But no! the cars would not go up the hill.

At last she left the train and started up the track alone. Do you think she had stopped working? No, indeed! She was going for help.

"Surely I can find someone to help me," she thought.

Over the hill and up the track went the little steam engine. Choo, choo! Choo, choo! Choo, choo! Choo!

Pretty soon she saw a big steam engine standing on a side track. He looked very big and strong.

Running alongside, she looked up and said:

"Will you help me over the hill with my train of cars? It is so long and heavy I can't get it over."

The big steam engine looked down at the little steam engine. Then he said:

"Don't you see that I am through my day's work? I have been rubbed and scoured ready for my next run. No, I cannot help you."

The little steam engine was sorry, but she went on, Choo, choo! Choo, choo! Choo, choo! Choo, choo!

Soon she came to a second big steam engine standing on a side track. He was puffing and puffing, as if he were tired.

"That big steam engine may help me," thought the little steam engine. She ran alongside and asked:

"Will you help me bring my train of cars over the hill? It is so long and so heavy that I can't get it over."

The second big steam engine answered:

"I have just come in from a long, long run. Don't you see how tired I am? Can't you get some other engine to help you this time?"

"I'll try," said the little steam engine, and off she went. Choo, choo! Choo, choo! Choo, choo!

After a while she came to a little steam engine just like herself. She ran alongside and said:

"Will you help me over the hill with my train of cars? It is so long and so heavy that I can't get it over."

"Yes, indeed!" said this little steam engine. "I'll be glad to help you, if I can."

So the little steam engines started back to where the train of cars had been standing. Both little steam engines went to the head of the train, one behind the other.

Puff, puff! Chug, choo! Off they started!

Slowly the cars began to move. Slowly they climbed the steep hill. As they climbed, each little steam engine began to sing:

"I-think-I-can! I-think-I-can! I-think-I-can! I-think-I-can! I-think-I-can! I-think-I-can! I think I can - I think I can - I think I can -"

And they did! Very soon they were over the hill and going down the other side.

Now they were on the plain again; and the little steam engine could pull her train herself. So she thanked the little engine who had come to help her, and said good-by.

And she went merrily on her way, singing:

"I-thought-I-could! I-thought-I-could! I-thought-I-could! I-thought-I-could! I thought I could - I thought I could - I thought I could - I thought I could - I thought I could - I thought I could -"

Dates of Local Significance 1890-1949

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| <p>1890 Harry Graham arrived in Sundre</p> <p>1893 David McDougall arrived from Morley</p> <p>1900 The first saw-log river drive took place between Coal Camp and the town of Red Deer</p> <p>1901 Minnie Fletcher (Cook) born- said to be the first white child to be born in the area</p> <p>1905 Alberta officially became a province
Great West Lumber Company began operation in the area</p> <p>1906 Alberta Settlers experienced one of the worst winters in recorded history</p> <p>1907 N.T. Hagen purchased the McDougall holdings</p> <p>1908 Forest Reserve land southwest of Sundre was surveyed
First bridge built</p> <p>1909 Sundre Post Office opened
Sundre named</p> <p>1914 World War One declared
Monarch Oil Well drilled south of Coal Camp</p> <p>1915 The Great Flood of the Red Deer River - bridges at Derbytown and Sundre washed out</p> | <p>Creamery brought from Derbytown to Sundre</p> <p>1916 The First Rodeo event held
Prohibition began</p> <p>1917 Sundre's Women's Institute was formed</p> <p>1918 World War One ended
The Spanish Influenza Pandemic</p> <p>1925 The First elk were seen in the Sundre area</p> <p>1928 Eagle Point School was built</p> <p>1929 Stock Market collapse and beginning of the Great Depression</p> <p>1930 Oil well drilled at Hunter Valley</p> <p>1935 Sundre's first home milk delivery began</p> <p>1935 Ed and Betty Knott purchased store from Hugh Pearce</p> <p>1939 World War Two was declared</p> <p>1945 World War Two ended
United Church Built</p> <p>1946 Sundre Legion Formed
Dr. Charles Miller and family arrived in Sundre</p> <p>1947 Sundre Creamery destroyed by fire</p> <p>1948 Hagen Hall destroyed by fire</p> <p>1949 Sundre Library opens</p> |
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The Stoney Indians

Sundre's Earliest Explorers

For centuries before the first explorers mapped the lands lying west of what was known as the Hind, or Wabish, River (Red Deer River) and long before settlers began to stake their land claims in the Sundre area, bands of North American Indians travelled the hills and valleys that marked the eastern slopes of the Rocky Mountain foothills in search of game, plants and wild berries.

First Nations people are said to have lived in what is now Alberta for at least twelve thousand years. One tribe, the Cree, consisting of two basic groups, the Woodland Cree, who lived mainly in Northern Alberta, and the Plains Cree, who migrated south and west from the prairies into the parkland region. These excellent hunters and trappers were among the first to trade with the Hudson's Bay Company in the 1600's.

A traditional hunter-gatherer society until the arrival of the white man and the establishment of reservations, the aboriginal people in this area of Central Alberta travelled in groups of families to the hunting grounds, pitching their tipis on the flats along the banks of the rivers en route. The men trapped and hunted while the women remained in the camps with the children, skinning the game and preparing the hides for use as clothing and shelter or, in later years, for trade. The women also had the responsibility of collecting plants and berries for food and for preparing and preserving the meat from the hunt.

Treaty 7, a peace treaty between the Blackfoot Confederacy, (Siksika, Piikani, Peigan) and Kainaiwa (Blood)) Tsuu T'ina (Sarcee), the Stoney (Bears paw, Chiniki, and Wesley/Goodstoney), and the crown, was signed in 1877, opening the way for the railroad and settlement, while providing a measure of protection and compensation for the aboriginal peoples. For the Stoney Nation at Morley, the document was signed by Chief Jacob Goodstoney.

It was at the Morley Reserve that the McDougall family had set up a mission in 1873 and it was from here that David McDougall travelled in 1893 to start ranching in Sundre.

By the time the development of Alberta began in earnest, life had changed drastically for the area's native Indians. Free to roam at will throughout the millennia, they were now on reservations,

recipients of one square mile of land per family, a few cattle and limited farm equipment. The land allotted to their use was often poor in quality and potential and such was the case at the Morley Reserve. For the most part, grazing was all it was good for. It would take a giant leap for the Stoney bands, descendants of the nomadic Sioux tribe and highly skilled hunters and trappers for thousands of years, to transform themselves into keepers of livestock, and it was very likely through the encouragement of the McDougall family, who were ranchers themselves, that the Morley area band developed the skills that enabled them to run such a highly successful cattle and rodeo business today.

Once the first settlers had arrived in Sundre, families of Stoney Indians still travelled throughout the area on their hunting expeditions. The Stoney, were known as a friendly people and the relationship between the white newcomers and the darker skinned native tribes was excellent. There are many stories of exchanges between settler families and members of the Stoney Indian band: A farm wife would offer a loaf of fresh baked bread to a tribe member, or maybe he would request a few eggs or some tea. Following the hunt, a generous piece of meat would be presented to settlers who had shared their food. Paul Bigstoney was a regular visitor at the homesteads along the James River. His eyes would sparkle when he was invited to sit awhile and share a fruit pie fresh out of the oven.



First Nations Visitor at Sundre Area Ranch. *Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum*

By around 1920, the Indian bands no longer set up their camps west of Sundre. The tipi poles that had served these families for years leaned, abandoned, into the forks of tree trunks, a linger-

ing reminder of a people who roamed the hills and riverbanks we call home for thousands of years before a white man ever dreamed of a New World.

The tipi poles are gone now, reduced to dust by wind and sun and cold and time. The graves of those who died during the hunt have become harder to find; the low pole fences that surrounded the graves have disintegrated and only an occasional pile of rocks, spotted by an observant passerby, is left, giving silent testimony to a traditional nomadic culture that settled into history, along with the mighty buffalo.

The First Twenty Years of Settlement

Remembering Some of the Sundre Area Pioneers of 1890 – 1910



To encourage individuals and families to leave their homelands and start new lives as farmers in Canada, the government introduced the Dominion Land Policy. The Dominion Land Policy offered free land to homesteaders. In the 1871 land policy, a settler could request a homestead of 160 acres (a quarter-section) for a registration fee of ten dollars and a residence requirement of five years, along with certain regulations regarding the amount of land that must be cleared during that period. In the Second Dominion Lands Act of 1872, the residence requirement was reduced to three years in order to compete with the American offer at the time. It was required that thirty acres of land must be cleared on the homestead during this period and that a permanent dwelling be erected.

In the Sundre area, surveying of land for homesteads began in 1893. Those who wished to file on particular lands before they were surveyed simply "squatted" on the property until such time

as the property lines were established. The lands were mapped out into sections (1 mile x 1 mile), and quarter sections (1/2 mile x 1/2 mile), with some being reserved for school land. Some of the original survey stakes can still be located. The Hudson's Bay Company also had reserve land in the area, as did the Calgary-Edmonton Railway, which would later become the Canadian Pacific Railway. Among the early surveyors to the area were F.W Wilkins in 1893; J.N. Wallace in 1902 and H.B. Proudfoot in 1904.

Although the biggest wave of settlers came west after 1910, with a huge influx occurring in 1911, the ones who came prior to that time were the trailblazers who lit the way for all those who would follow. They built the first stores and schools; their wagons forged the first rutted homestead trails; their cattle and horses formed the first basic breeding stock of the area; their children were the first white children born in the area – the first of a new breed of tough Canadians, native to the western frontier.

Of the many settlers who came to the Sundre area prior to 1910, for some, there is no documented history and for others there is little more than a name and a vague location with no record of date of arrival. Although a few of the latter have been mentioned at the end of this section because it is fairly likely they arrived prior to 1910, there are more who have not been included because of a lack of information. There are also bound to be some families I have inadvertently omitted. The fact that these settlers' names do not appear on these pages does not in any way imply that their arrival in the area was any less significant than that of the pioneers who are mentioned. Every single individual who made his or her home here, even if only for a short time, helped open up the Sundre area, preparing the way for the progressive and flourishing community we all enjoy today. Every task carried out by every member of a family was vitally important: When young Jimmy helped his dad clear the brush from around the homestead, or little Martha assisted her mother in gathering the eggs, they contributed to the success of the family, the farm and ultimately of the entire settlement. Without successful homesteads there would have been no demand for country stores or post offices or schools; improvement districts would never have been formed; roads and bridges would never have been built.

Our early pioneers make up a rich tapestry of cultures, personalities, beliefs and achievements. Their legacy to us is apparent, not only in the reality of the thriving communities of the present, which they founded and then supported through good times and bad, but also in the diversity of skills and techniques they introduced into the area, many of which we still incorporate into the way we do things today. These settlers also gave us the huge range of culinary choices we now enjoy, from baked beans to perogies - from smoked bacon to Lefsa. They introduced new garden produce and new methods of preserving it; new types of livestock and tough, hard working horses; new music and musical instruments; new words and expressions and even new ways to worship. These pioneers of the western reaches of the New World, despite their vastly differing customs and traditions, had three critical attributes in common that were essential to their futures, and to ours: courage, resilience and determination. These men and women often arrived with little more than the clothes on their backs and a few simple tools and possessions and yet, from nothing but the land they laid claim to, they built homes and farms and lives. When their homes burned to the ground, as they often did given the reliance on wood for heat and oil for lamps, the pioneer families rebuilt; when a period of drought or a particularly harsh winter robbed them of livestock and crops, they found ways to make what little food they had go further and sometimes fed the straw from their mattresses to their starving animals. When a youngster drowned in the open well, or a teenage son or a husband died in a logging or hunting accident, most of these families, even as they were faced with the horror of their loss, bravely picked up the pieces of their lives and carried on. Of course, not all the pioneers stayed. In fact, there were many who moved on after a very short time, hoping for a gentler way of life elsewhere.

Tough as the pioneering life was, there were good times too – picnics, dances and community barn raisings; swimming in the river at the height of summer; trips to Olds for supplies and a little diversion; visiting with the neighbours – the pioneers worked hard, but they certainly knew how to enjoy themselves too.

The early settlers in and around Sundre included a fair measure of colourful characters and it seems that the further west the settlement, the more colourful the inhabitants became! Bearberry,

in particular, can boast some very interesting personalities amongst its early residents, including Charles Bloxham, great-great grandson of the infamous “Buffalo Bill”, who became a local legend in his own right for his excellent brand of moonshine. There was sad Mr. Medgaard, a middle-aged squatter who lived in a cave and stored eggs in the creek. And poor Charlie Church, who counted every penny twice and quite possibly died prematurely because he didn’t believe that banks could be trusted. These legendary individuals have a special place in the history of Sundre and the surrounding districts, for they remind us of the wonderful diversity of our community’s heritage and the complex variations of the human personality.

So let’s take a journey back in time and meet some of those early Sundre and area pioneers who broke and gentled the wild western lands with a combination of hard physical labour and unshakable faith:

1890 Harry Graham

Harry Graham was an old friend of the Niddrie and Fletcher families of Morley, who were also to become early Sundre area settlers when they laid claim to land in the Derbytown district. He had come to Morley from Cobourg, Ontario, in 1886, with his father and brothers. Harry was the first recorded white settler to the Sundre area, beating David McDougall’s arrival by three years and setting up camp initially in the area that would bear the McDougall name – McDougal Flats. Mr. Graham soon moved to land further west on what is now the Coal Camp/Mountain Aire Lodge Road. At the confluence of the Hauling and Williams Creeks he built his house and barns and from there he ran a trading post, doing business with the local Indians who frequently camped in the area. He stayed on this land, which we know today as Red Deer River Ranches, for four years. Some say he was anticipating the arrival of the woman he hoped would be his wife, but by several accounts the lady did not wish to live so far into the wilderness and this may well have impacted Harry’s decision to leave the area. There was also the matter of a rogue grizzly bear, which frequently attacked and killed Harry’s stock. The bear was persistent and many losses occurred.

In 1896, Harry Graham packed up and moved east of the Big Red to where the Little Red Deer River meanders through the Westward Ho area.

Here he built a beautiful house in hopes of persuading his special lady, who happened to be the daughter of David McDougall, to marry him, but it was not to be.

Mr. Graham sold the ranch, twenty miles southwest of Sundre, to John Morgan and Arthur Heaton in 1904.

1893. David McDougall

Considered one of Sundre's founding fathers, David McDougall, born 1844 in Ontario, was the son of a missionary of Scottish descent. He moved here from the Morley Mission in 1893. His wife was the former Annie McKenzie, born 1851, and their children were Georgina, Jane and David. On his arrival, David senior squatted on land which is now known as McDougal Flats (an "L" was lost from the name McDougall when the name of the McDougal School was recorded in error.) David junior also assisted McDougall on the ranch. Annie remained in Morley but visited from time to time, as did the couple's two daughters. The McDougall family eventually owned several thousand acres of land throughout the area, including the land on which the Town of Sundre now stands. In 1906, David sold all his cattle and in 1907 he sold his holdings to N. T. Hagen and moved back to Morley. He died there in 1926.

1893 Jack Smith

When David McDougall came to Sundre to stake his claim in 1893, he soon had a young man working for him to help with chores. John W. Smith, known to most as "Jack", was just eighteen years old when he began working for McDougall, and the stories Jack told of the McDougall cattle drives between Sundre and Morley became legendary when, in later years, he passed them on to his children.

Jack was born in Ontario on September 12th, 1875 to Tom and Hanna (Leaman) Smith. He and four of his seven brothers homesteaded in the Waterside district, about six miles east of Sundre, and it is in this location that the family, including Jack's father and his grandfather, Sam Smith, operated the very first sawmill west of Olds.

In 1903, Jack married Josephine Heyse, born February 29th, 1880, in Michigan USA. Josephine homesteaded with her sister and brother-in-law in the James River district and she worked at the Olds Hotel, baking bread, which was sold to the immigrant families in the area. It was while Jack

was visiting the hotel that the couple first became acquainted.

The couple produced six children – Bernard, Albert, Howard, Tom, Millie and Alta. Millie, born May 11th, 1915, met Guy Haynes, born in Olds in 1907, and the couple married in 1934. They became the parents of two children, John in 1936, and Virginia in 1937.

Ten years after their marriage, the Haynes family moved from the Waterside area to a farm west of Sundre. Because the farm was located right next to the Sundre Cemetery, the couple became responsible for maintenance of the cemetery, which had been officially founded by the farm's previous owners, Ike and Rueben Brooks, in 1926. Millie took over the bookwork for the facility and at that time there were only about twelve graves. She held this position for many years, and by the time the responsibilities were passed to another area resident, the cemetery was almost full.

Millie has many memories of her time on the farm. She formed the first McDougal Home and School Association and along with other volunteers, helped to raise money to buy Christmas presents for the students and to help out local homesteaders who had no money to buy gifts for their own children. Additions were added to the school over the years, and it was Guy Haynes, along with Wilfred Strome, who travelled to Red Deer with tractor and flat bed trailer to purchase and haul the building that is now used as a kitchen in what eventually became the McDougal Community Hall. Millie, along with the women in her neighbourhood, was also involved in the building of the first church in that area.

There were numerous floods when Millie and Guy were raising their children on the farm and in late spring, when the Haynes children were sitting their exams, they often had to cross the flooded areas on planks of wood as all the bridges washed out at these times.

After John Haynes married, he and his bride lived close to Millie and Guy. The new Mrs. Haynes was somewhat perturbed to discover that her electric doorbell rang at all hours of the day and night from time to time, but that there was nobody at the door. Living so close to the cemetery, this was a little alarming, and the dark nights conjured up ideas about ghosts wandering the countryside. However, the mystery was solved when it was found that faulty wiring caused a short in the doorbell mechanism whenever there was an electrical storm anywhere close by!

Millie and Guy were very active in the fund raising and building of the Senior Citizens Recreation Centre (Sundre West Country Centre) in the late 1970s and also in raising funds for the building of the Foothills Lodge Seniors Home in the 1980s. Also, for several years, Millie was responsible for arranging coach tours for local seniors to various places of interest in Alberta and beyond. Often, these were day trips, but sometimes, if the destination was a long way distant, they were two to three day trips. Eventually, at the age of eighty-three, Millie decided to retire from the tour company business and began to take life a little easier.

Fourteen years ago, Millie and Guy moved into Foothills Lodge, in Sundre. Their son, John, still lives on the farm.

Since then Guy Haynes has passed away. Millie, who celebrated her ninety-third birthday in May 2008 and is one of the Sundre area's oldest native daughters, continues to enjoy the company of friends and family and to participate in some of the activities available at the Lodge, the West Country Centre, and in the general community.

1894 The Niddrie Family

William Niddrie was born in Argyllshire, Scotland, in 1851. He married Hannah Dunning in 1883 and moved to Canada the same year. The couple settled into dairy farming in the Winnipeg area and three children were born: Willie, 1885, John, 1887 and Fred, 1890. It was while they lived in Manitoba that the Niddries met the Samuel Fletcher family. The friendship that developed between these families would be a lasting one and one that would have a significant impact on the establishment of the Derbytown district and, consequently, on the little upriver settlement that would one day be known as Sundre.

In 1890, the Niddries, following in the footsteps of the Fletchers, moved their family from Manitoba to Morley, where the McDougall family had set up a mission. Two more children were born to them: Annie in 1892 and Fanny in 1894. In 1894, after several years of drought and hardship, the Niddries, along with Samuel Fletcher's son, Arthur, and another bachelor by the name of Coleman, journeyed approximately seventy miles north and laid claim to their respective holdings on the Red Deer River by squatting on the yet to be surveyed land.

The early years were a struggle for the Niddrie family. Intense cold and deep snows tended to be

the hallmark of those early winters and loss of livestock was commonplace. The Niddries were among those suffering serious cattle losses and this had a severe impact on the family's income, which came solely from the sale of steers in the fall of each year.

Despite the early hardships, life did improve for the Niddries and the family became firmly established in the settlement of Derbytown.

Much later, in 1950, Fred Niddrie was elected to the Alberta Legislature as Social Credit MLA for the Olds Constituency. He was instrumental in bringing a concrete span bridge to Sundre in the late 1950's. Unfortunately, Fred passed away before he could witness the results of his years of lobbying and hard work. The honour of representing Fred at the official opening of the Sundre Bridge was given to his wife, Edith (Pendle).



John & Verda Niddrie Wedding in the Early 1900s. *Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum*

1894 Arthur Fletcher

Originally from England, Samuel and Margaret Fletcher moved with their son, Arthur,

to Morley, from Winnipeg, Manitoba, in 1889. In 1894, along with the Niddrie and Coleman families, they travelled north to land across the river from Eagle Valley that was part of what would become known as Derbytown. The Fletchers squatted on what is now the SE¼ of 5-34-4-W5. Margaret passed away back in Morley a year later, in 1895 and is buried there in the Indian Cemetery.

When the Colemans packed up and returned to Morley in 1899, Arthur purchased their holdings – NE¼ of 26-33-5-5 and also purchased the W½-25-33-5-5.



Mr. & Mrs. Arthur Fletcher. *Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum*

These holdings became well known as the CX Hereford Ranch and bulls carrying the CX brand were much in demand all over Canada. Many a settler started farming with stock – cattle and horses – carrying the Fletcher brand. Arthur Fletcher, who had married Margaret Edwards in 1899, was the father of three children: Minnie (Cook), the first white child to be born in the

Sundre area, Pearl (Jeanott) and Frank. The children received no schooling until the Rockwood School was built in 1909.

Arthur had one of the first chuck wagon teams to compete in the Calgary Stampede. At that time, a chuck wagon team consisted of a full wagon, pulled by a team of Clydesdales or other draft horses.

Samuel Fletcher died in Armstrong, BC in 1916. Arthur remained on the ranch until his death in 1952, one year after the passing of his wife.

The Derbytown Bridge, the original of which was built in 1909, was referred to as the Niddire/Fletcher Bridge.

1894 The Colemans

The Colemans, like Harry Graham, David McDougall, the Fletchers and the Niddries, came to the Sundre area from Morley, Alberta. They travelled to the Derbytown district with the Fletchers and the Niddries in 1894. Unlike their friends, they did not settle permanently on the homestead adjacent to the Red Deer River, but chose instead to return to Morley in 1899.

1896 Mr. Ward

In 1896, a Mr. Ward built a small shack a few hundred yards east of the Westward Ho Corner. The shack was partitioned into two areas. One of these served as Mr. Ward's living quarters and the other housed his saddle horse!

1898 (Approx) The Schrader Family

Around 1898, Mr. And Mrs John C. Schrader moved from Iowa, USA, to holdings west of Olds, across the Dog Pound Creek. With their five children, Walter, John, Albert, Bob and Ida, they started a ranching operation that would eventually lead to the production of some of the best bucking horses in the history of Western Canadian Rodeo.

In 1917, the family purchased additional land in the James River/Crammond area, where a little creek, now known as the Schrader Creek, meandered through the gently rolling landscape. The previous owner of the land was a Mr. Addington. From this period on, the Schrader family would conduct a semi-annual cattle drive, between the Harmattan and James River ranches, which in the spring, sometimes involved up to six hundred head of cattle. It was the spring cattle drive that would be most remembered by participants and onlookers, for when rivers ran too

high for the cattle to cross safely they had to be driven east over the Sundre Bridge before heading north. The cattle would hit the bridge on the run after descending the Sundre Hill - surging across the iron-span structure, which would literally "dance" in response to the impact of the continuous flow of pounding hooves.

Once across the bridge, the cattle would be turned north, where cowboys and animals would rest for a while on the site of the old rodeo grounds, where the Sundre hospital is located. The Schrader cattle drives were discontinued in the 1950's and Sundre lost an exciting diversion from daily life to the annals of history.

1899 John Morgan

John and Charles Morgan were born in England and came to Canada in 1898 with the intention of joining the adventure of the Klondike Gold Rush. However, when en route to the Yukon the brothers were informed that they could not qualify as prospectors unless they had either eleven hundred dollars in cash or the equivalent in equipment and supplies. The Morgans did not meet the criteria.

In June 1899, the Morgan brothers traded their dreams of great adventure and the possibility of instant wealth for one of a more solid nature. John filed on the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of 6-20 in what is now the Harmattan area and his brother filed on the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of the same section.

Two years later, John travelled west with Harry Graham to visit Harry's Ranch. He liked what he saw and a few months later took possession of the ranch in partnership with another early settler, Arthur Heaton. Today, this land is part of Red Deer River Ranches.

John married Elsie Grange and the couple produced five children, John junior (Jack), Jeffrey, Sybil, Clarice and Dave. The eldest of these, Jack, was destined to become one of Sundre's most prolific developers and businessmen, founding several successful and ongoing businesses, while Dave, the youngest, put his energies into running a very successful cattle business with his dad from the family homestead. The original Harmattan ranch is still operated under the Morgan name by Dave's wife and their son, Johnny.

Following his death in 1965, John senior's ashes were scattered on Butcher's Hill - on the ranch west of Sundre where he spent so many happy times. A memorial plaque at that location pays tribute to him.



John & Elsie Morgan and Family at Rock Cut in 1929.
Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum

1902 Al Siddon

Al Siddon was a very early homesteader in the Westward Ho area, arriving there in 1902. In 1908, he worked on the construction of the bridges at Derbytown and Sundre. He also hauled lumber for the Great West Lumber Company, located southwest of Sundre, near Coal Camp.

1902 The Theodore Moe Family

Mr. and Mrs. Theodore Moe, along with their three daughters, Anna, Mary and Elizabeth, left their home in Minnesota, USA in 1902 and settled in the Eagle Hill District. Five years later, the family moved to Olds, where Mrs. Moe ran a boarding house and her husband ran a feed mill in partnership with a Mr. Johnsrud. Theodore died in 1940 and his wife died a year and a half later.

1902 Charlie Reed

Charlie Reed, a blacksmith and mechanic, was born September 15, 1881 in Michigan, USA. He came to Alberta in 1902 with his father, Bill, his mother and two sisters, Pearl and Rosa. They all settled in the Eagle Valley area. Charlie and his father set up separate homesteads but worked the two parcels together.

In 1920, Charlie moved to Lethbridge, Alberta, where he assisted his sister, Pearl, and her husband, Edward Tudor, in the farming business they had established there. Ten years later, he moved back to the Eagle Valley for a few years but then relocated to the Bearberry area. Charlie Reed was known as a quiet man, a good listener

with a generous nature and a true pioneering spirit. When his eyesight began to fail, he moved onto the Sundre flats to live with his nephew, Frank Seigfried, along with Frank's wife, Olive, and their daughter, Charlene. He died there in 1974 at the age of ninety-three and was buried at the Eagle Valley Cemetery.

1903 Albin Carlson

Albin Carlson was born in Sweden and came with his parents to Canada around 1887. In 1903, the family found themselves in Olds, Alberta, and a short time later they homesteaded in the settlement of Harmattan.

By the time he was a young man, Albin was looking for greener pastures and in January 1913, he filed on SE $\frac{1}{4}$ -17-33-7-W5 in the Bearberry district. That first winter would prove Albin's vigour as a pioneer as he spent it living in a tent, enduring temperatures of thirty-five below, while assisting Dick Nelson in cutting and hauling logs to build a cabin and barn.

Albin built his own cabin on the northeast corner of his quarter and, after marrying in 1924, sold his holdings a year later to Fred and Jim Elder for nine hundred dollars and returned to Harmattan. He and his wife eventually retired to Didsbury.

1903 Alvie Siegfried

Alvie Seigfried arrived in the Eagle Valley area in 1903 with companions Jud Hanson and Walter Bates. Born in Iowa, USA, Alvie was the oldest child of a large family. He homesteaded the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ -20-33-4-5. Rosabelle Reed, the daughter of 1902 homesteader, Bill Reed, and Alvie were married in 1906 and had four children, Franklin, born 1908, Myrtle, 1911, Roy, 1915 and Charlie, 1917. Four other children died in infancy. Charlie Seigfried was born after his father passed away from pneumonia in 1917.

1903 Walter Bates

Born in 1874, Walter Bates from Hamilton, Ontario, travelled by wagon train from Montana with two companions, Alvie Siegfried and Jud Hanson, to the Eagle Valley area. Walter staked a claim on the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ -20-30-4-5. Walter was the secretary of the original Eagle Valley and Westward Ho School Boards in 1905. After Alvie Seigfried passed away, Walter married his widow, the former Rosabelle Reed, who was born in Michigan. The

newlyweds returned from their honeymoon to live on the Seigfried place, but in later years purchased the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ -29-33-4-5. A daughter, Catherine was born to this couple in 1926, and in 1929, a son, William. Walter died in 1961.

1903 J. Markuson

Mr. J. Markuson moved to the Derbys town District in 1903 and resided there for a number of years. He was a sports enthusiast and a pitcher on the Derbys town Ball Team. At some point he left the area and moved to Chilliwack, BC.

1903 Judson Hanson

Judson Hanson was born in South Dakota in 1878. He travelled to Alberta in 1903 with Walter Bates and Alvie Seigfried and homesteaded the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ -30-33-4-5. In 1908, he married Augusta Monigar, who was born in Nebraska in 1889. Their daughter, Ida May, was born in 1909. After moving to Montana in 1910, the couple's second child, Justin (Jay) was born. In 1911, the Hansons returned to their Mound area homestead but after a year went back to Montana. They had a second son, Walter, in 1916, and another daughter, Viola, in 1918.

1903 Lloyd and Emma Holdbrook

Lloyd and Emma (Sparks) Holdbrook moved to the S1/2-4-34-4-5 at Eagle Valley in 1903. Before building their own home, they lived in a house owned by Arthur Fletcher.

1904 The Overguard Family

Mr. & Mrs. Berant Overguard were Norwegians who settled in the Rockwood district in 1904. Their son, Martin, who married Maude Botham, would become renowned for his dam building skills and for his work with Ducks Unlimited and the Provincial Government in the field of wildlife conservation. One of Martin's earliest projects was a cable footbridge over the James River. This bridge, built around 1913-14, with a span of three hundred feet, enabled children to the north of the river to attend the first Lobley School. Years later, Martin helped construct the Raven Fish Hatchery and the original log dam at Burnstick Lake. With no formal engineering training, Martin quickly became well known for his dam building skills and was always in demand for consultation and assistance. He eventually became an employee of Ducks Unlimited and, assisted by his son, John,

and several other local men, built scores of dams throughout Alberta and across the prairies. The resulting increase in waterfowl and other wildlife populations earned Martin a place in history when his story appeared in National Geographic Magazine. Martin Overguard was eighty years old when he acted as a consultant on what would be his last dam project.

1904 The Gilbert Gleasons

Gilbert and Susan Gleason came to the Eagle Point district, north of Sundre, from South Dakota in 1904 and homesteaded the NW1/4-22-33-5-W5. The Gleasons had three daughters, Maud (Golden), Sophie (Ross), and Lottie (Schmidt).

Gilbert is remembered for chopping his way through the bush from his home quarter and creating the first official trail into Sundre.

The Gleasons eventually sold their farm to their granddaughter, Laura, (Maud's daughter) and her husband, Frank Tooth.

Susan Gleason died in 1945 and Gilbert died in 1950.

1904 S. Byron Harrison

S. Byron (Barney) Harrison was born in 1882 in Ingoldsby County, Ontario. He arrived in the Mound area in 1904 with Billy Berling and, for a while, the two bachelors worked for the Great West Lumber Company, which operated southwest of Sundre at Coal Camp. Eventually, the pair set up homesteads in the Rockwood district.

In 1934, Barney married Anna Moe, born in Minnesota in 1902. Anna's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Theodore Moe had lived for five years in the Eagle Hill district before moving to Olds, where Theodore helped build the Olds Agricultural College.

Upon his marriage, Barney became dad to Anna's fourteen-month-old daughter, Esther (Lynn). The couple had two sons together, Henry, in 1935, and Peter, who was born in 1936 but lived only a few months.

Barney always enjoyed the simple things in life, with nature and animals having very high priority. He died in 1955 at the age of seventy-three.

1904 Oscar Harrison.

Oscar Harrison, formerly of Saskatchewan, and originally from Ontario, moved into the Mound area in 1904, filing claim on land just south

of that of his brother, Barney Harrison. In 1916 he married Jessie Spencer, whose family he had met years earlier when working in their hometown of Carnduff, Saskatchewan. In 1917, the Harrisons' first child, Martin was born, to be followed in 1924 by Earl. Two other children, Allan and Donna, completed the family.

Oscar also served as editor to what is probably the Sundre area's first newspaper, the Derbytown Eye Opener.

1904 William Theodore Ross Family

William Ross was born in Chicago, Illinois, in 1881. In 1904 he came to Alberta and filed a homestead claim on the land where the Mound Cemetery is now located. In 1909 he married Sophia Gleason from Mound. Sophia was born in South Dakota in 1892. The couple raised nine children.

Over a period of several years, Bill worked on the construction of bridges at Derbytown, Sundre, Innisfail, Drumheller and Trochu.

With old age approaching, Bill left his homestead, donating the land for a cemetery, and moved to the home of family, east of Innisfail. He died in 1973.



Bill Ross and Oxen Delivering Logs to the Billy Berling Property in 1912. *Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum*

1904 Billy Berling

Billy arrived in the Mound district in 1904, accompanied by Barney Harrison. By all accounts, his Danish heritage made him partial to good food and the telling of a good joke! Eventually he set up a homestead in the Rockwood district and, for many years, he raised sheep in the area and also produced excellent honey from his beehives. He married Hulda Johnson in or around 1930 and, over the years, nine children were born: Baldur, Elsie, Nell (Stevenson), Violet (Logan), Albert, Ronald, Jean, Wilma and Jim.

1904 William Golden

William Wesley Golden was born in Norfolk County, Ontario on April 24, 1874. His father, George, was born in Wiltshire, England.

William came to Western Canada in 1904 and settled two miles east and one and a half miles north of Sundre around that time. He settled the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ -12-33-5-5 and to earn money he helped build many of the new roads in the Sundre area. He also ran a sawmill on his property, and in the fall of each year he went south, to Vulcan and Blackie, and worked on the threshing crews. He married Maud Mae Gleason, daughter of area homesteaders Gilbert and Susan Gleason, in 1910 and eight children were born to the couple.

The Vic Bjorkman's eventually purchased the Golden land and for several years they ran a commercial greenhouse from that site.

1904 D.C. Johnson and Samuel Johnson

Brothers, Samuel Freeland Johnson and D.C. Johnson (Bud) came to the Eagle Valley from the Blue Ridge Mountains in North Carolina in 1904. Samuel homesteaded the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ -4-34-4-5. Samuels's wife, Mary, and the couple's four children joined him in 1905. One of the children, Verda, married John Niddrie, the son of one of the area's earliest pioneers, William Niddrie of Derbytown.

Bud Johnson and his wife, Bessie (De Board), ran a grocery store and livery barn in Derbytown from 1910, but then moved to Idaho. They returned to the Sundre area fifteen years later but eventually returned to Idaho permanently.

Samuel Johnson died on November 18, 1937 and his wife Mary passed away on July 7, 1938.

1905 William and Daisy Rice

The Rice family, William, Daisy and their children, Tillie and Henry, travelled by covered wagon from their home in Montana to the James River area in 1905. They brought with them all their worldly goods, which included five Percheron horses and a milk cow. Within eighteen months of setting up their homestead all the horses had died from swamp fever. The Rice family carried on despite the hardships, as did so many early settlers, and three more children were born: Alta, Susie and William Junior. Susie was not very old when she contacted pneumonia. The rivers were very high that year and it was impossible to get medical help. The little girl died at home and is

buried on the family farm. The family moved to a farm eight miles west of Olds in 1909 where, after losing their little son, William, who fell down the family well and drowned, they resided until their deaths – William Senior in 1937, and Daisy in 1939.

1905 The Dean Brothers and Charlie Johnson

Alfred and Thomas Dean, along with their good friend, Charlie Johnson, all hailed from the Town of Darlington, England. By the dawning of the nineteenth century they had made the decision to start a new life in Canada.

The bachelors spent several years working their way west across the vast expanse of their new land, even travelling into Montana for a period when the work situation was good there. In 1905, they each filed a claim on homesteads within the same section of land: 20-33-5-W5, west of the Red Deer River. Thomas took the N.W. quarter, Alfred the N.E. and Charlie Johnson took the S.W. They initially put up a shack that would serve as "home" for all three, while they worked to improve the land and to earn money to buy equipment and livestock. In that first year of homesteading, the three did casual work for area rancher, David McDougall.

The Deans' younger brother, Stanly, had by this time travelled from England and joined the three men and had staked a claim on the remaining quarter on Section 20.

At some point prior to 1909, Charlie Johnson apparently became disillusioned with the life of a pioneer and it is believed he returned to England. In the meantime, Alfred had married Hettie Martin in 1908. Hettie's family, from the USA, were also early pioneers in the area and they homesteaded land a little west of the Dean holdings.

Stan Dean married an English girl by the name of Esther Spencer. He met Esther when she was visiting from the UK with her sister and brother-in-law, Steve and Betty Craig, who lived in the Sunberry Valley area.

Tommy Dean remained a bachelor throughout his life and lived between his own shack and the home of Stan and his family until he was quite elderly. He died in Didsbury at the age of ninety.

Alf and Hettie Dean had no children and also had the misfortune of losing their home to a fire, a common tragedy in those early settlement years. Following WWI, they sold their land and took over

the Martin homestead when Hettie's parents returned to the States.

Hettie was very involved with the Sundre Women's Institute and was a driving force in getting the W.I. Hall built, close to where the Catholic Church is now located. In 1936, the couple sold the original Martin land and moved into Sundre, where Hettie rented rooms to transients. She died quite suddenly in 1943 and a year later Alfred died too.

Stan and Esther Dean and their three children had relocated to the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ -22-33-2-5. Eventually, there were five Dean children, Bessie, Nancy, Robert, Spencer and James.

Stan and Esther retired to Sundre in 1946 and Robert took over the family farm. Stan passed away in 1966 and Esther died a few years later.

1905 The Mjolsness Brothers

Although they actually arrived in the Sunberry Valley area, west of Sundre, in 1905, the Mjolsness brothers did not all file on homesteads at the same time. John and Martin were the first to start working their own lands, NW $\frac{1}{4}$ -2-33-6-W5 and NE $\frac{1}{4}$ -2-33-6-W5 respectively, in 1906, while Joseph began homesteading NE $\frac{1}{4}$ -3-33-6-W5 in 1909 and Louis filed on NE $\frac{1}{4}$ -27-32-5-W5 in 1910.

The brothers, four of eleven children born to John and Clara Mjolsness had left their home in Hendrum, Minnesota to strike out on their own, and they all worked hard at breaking the quarters they eventually owned.

By 1914, all four brothers had proved up their homesteads. Each had married and started a family and over many changing seasons had been witness to the growth and development of the area. In later years, John, his wife Hilda (Knutsvig) of Bergen, and their family moved to Didsbury, while Martin, his wife Lettie, and their family moved to Coronation. Alfred and his wife Jean, along with their family, settled in the Bergen area, while Louis, with his wife, Minnie, and family, remained west of Sundre, living in the McDougal Flats area. Their sons, Chester and Lloyd, eventually formed the Spray Lakes Sawmill, near Banff, and Chester became one of Sundre's first Village Councillors and also served on Town Council in 1956.

The elder Mjolsness couple, John and Clara, left Minnesota for the Canadian west in 1907 with their remaining children: Mary, Lorenza, Joe, Clarence, William, Esther and Endred. For a while, they lived at Dog Pound, six miles west of Olds,

and then built a home on a half section they purchased in the Bergen area. Their son Joe was killed in action during WW1 and Clarence died from rheumatic fever at the age of 19. As adults, Mary, Lorenza, Esther, William and Eldred remained in the Bergen area, with Lorenza and Esther moving away in later years.

1905 William and Lydia Dominy

William (Bill) Dominy came to Canada from England in 1905 and homesteaded the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ -12-33-5-5. Once he had built a home, he sent for his wife, Lydia and daughters, Daisy, Ethel and Olive May.

Mr. Dominy was employed in Hagen's Store and when Fred Jeannot and John Macleod took it over and renamed it the Red and White Store, he continued to work there. He was a Justice of the Peace and served on the Sundre Rural School Board.

Lydia Dominy was an accomplished pianist and taught music. She was very interested in young people and formed a girl's club at one time where she tried to instil a more cultured aspect to the personalities of the young women.

In 1927, Mrs. Dominy acquired a small parcel of land on the East side of the Sundre Bridge from N.S. Ellithorpe. On this land she built a one-room house, where she would spend her days while her husband worked at the store, returning to the homestead with him each night. Gradually, she added more rooms to the little Sundre house and named it "The Retreat". Eventually, she and her husband moved into "The Retreat" permanently.

William Dominy passed away in 1944 and Lydia continued to live in their Sundre home until she was well into her nineties. She died at the age of one hundred years in 1965.

1905 Nathan Smith Ellithorpe

Nathan Smith (N.S.) Ellithorpe hailed from Battle Creek, Iowa and came to Alberta in 1903. In 1905 he filed on a quarter of land at Westward Ho and, around the same time, purchased a home in Olds. He sent for his son Ralph, aged thirteen, who had remained in the USA to attend school.

Mr. Ellithorpe was a land agent and acquired a considerable amount of land himself, but following the devastating winter of 1906/07, the bottom dropped out of the land market and left N.S. with a great deal of debt. He and Ralph moved to the Westward Ho homestead and constructed

buildings there. A short time later, in 1907, they lost all their horses to swamp fever and from then on had to rely on oxen to help them with the farm work.

In an attempt to pay off a large property tax bill, N.S., along with other area landowners, began doing road construction. Despite this, N.S. was unable to come up with enough money to pay off his debts and was forced to part with all his land holdings except the Westward Ho property.

In 1927, N.S. bought six acres of land on the east bank of the Red Deer River, just across the Sundre Bridge, from the Calgary-Edmonton Land Company. He built a store there but in 1930 he returned to the USA, where he stayed until after WWII.

When N.S. returned from the USA he lived in a little cabin on land owned by son, Ralph. In 1950, at the age of eighty-six years, N.S. passed away at the home of his daughter.

1906 James W. Dames Family

Sources point to the arrival of Mr. And Mrs. James Dames in the Derbytown district as 1906. The couple had two sons, Frank and Harold. James, better known as Jimmy, purchased the Derbytown Store from Bud Johnson in 1909 and operated it, along with a dance hall, and later a blacksmith shop, for several years.

Jimmy was one of the first men from the area to enlist for WWI in 1914. Unfortunately, he made the ultimate sacrifice when he was killed at Vimy Ridge. Mrs. Dames sold the store to H. Yewell and she and her children left their homestead and moved to British Columbia, before finally settling in California, USA.

1906 Malcolm Dix

Malcolm (Mac) Dix homesteaded the NE¼ 4-34-4-5 in 1906. He was a bachelor and he ran a small store from his home in 1907. He came to the area from Montana and a few years after claiming his Sundre area homestead, he returned there and married Kitty Morgan.

When the couple came back to Alberta, they brought Kitty's father, "Pop", with them, along with her two brothers, Frank and Bill. Their first son, Harold, was born in 1914, followed by Bud, and then Donald in 1918.

Mac had a racehorse he named "Grey Eagle" and it is said that this horse beat every other horse in Central Alberta. Mac and his family moved to Olds around 1917.

1906 Charlie and Nellie Howton

The Howton family, Charlie, Nellie and two children, hailed from Washington State and came to the Sundre area in 1906. They laid claim to what was considered a large amount of land in the early days of settlement: The NE¼ of 4; W½ and NE¼ of 5, and all of section 9, all in township 33-4-5.

Charlie owned a Democrat and it was frequently called into service as a hearse, transporting many early settlers to their final resting places.

1906 Fred Lobley

Brothers Fred and Jack Lobley were settlers from England who arrived in the district that would take their name in July 1906.

Fred married and he and his wife had four children: twin girls, Helen and Joan, and sons, Jack and Jim.

1906 Robert and Peter MacKay

Brothers Robert and Peter MacKay were from Scotland and both served with the Lord Lovat Scouts during the Boer War. After discharge, the pair emigrated to Canada and arrived in the Lobley district in time to experience the cruel and historic winter that ravaged much of Alberta in 1906-07.

The snow was waist deep as the brothers struggled to build their log cabin that year – a fitting test of the pioneering spirit of any new settler.

The MacKays raised the first registered Angus cattle in the country and developed a good-sized herd.

Peter MacKay was a blacksmith and his services were much in demand during the early settlement years.

In 1961, the brothers returned to their homeland to live out their senior years. Peter died in 1969 at the age of eighty-eight, while Robert reached the grand age of ninety-seven before dying in 1974.

1906 George Pearce

Born in Herne Bay, England in 1877, George Pearce married Grace Paige and the couple made a living from their small business in the south of England.

George, who as a lad had sung at Canterbury Cathedral, was a dreamer who longed to travel across the ocean to Canada to build a new life for himself and his family.

In 1906, leaving his family behind in England, he set sail on the Atlantic Ocean with a heart full of hope, promising his wife he would bring her to Canada as soon as he had a home built for her and their two sons, Hugh and Freddie. He spent time in Ontario, working on road building crews and then made his way westward, finally filing a claim on a homestead in the Bearberry Valley.

George was employed at a local sawmill, where he traded part of his work for the boards he would need to build his home. He stored all his materials under a large tree on his property and was ready to start construction when dry conditions and lightning storms caused many fires throughout the area. George took part in fighting them. How ironic and tragic that it would be a lightning strike on the old tree on George's property that reduced his dreams and months of hard work to a pile of ashes. All the materials for the Pearce family home were destroyed.

Grace and the boys joined George on the homestead anyway. The family lived in a tent until George was able to construct a home. Life was often hard for the little family, but like other settlers, they persevered and two more sons, Stanley and Ernest, were born. They must have been devastated when another fire robbed them of everything they owned, burning their home to the ground. Tragedy struck again when their son, Freddie, died as a result of illness, and was laid to rest on a high hill overlooking the creek.

Fire stole a great deal from the Pearce family, but it also provided a means for George to make a living, supplementing the erratic and often meagre income the family made from the farm. During the summer months, George was the fire lookout man at Blue Hill. He built the first fire tower in that location.

The Pearce family traded regularly with the Indians who passed through the area, accepting small furs in exchange for basic food supplies.

George Pearce died in 1960 in Calgary. Grace lived to be over a hundred and five years old and despite the many hardships of her life, she never failed to focus on the good times, the good friends and neighbours in the Bearberry.

Hugh Pearce, who owned a store in Sundre and also a garage, wrote his memoirs after reaching the age of eighty.

Ernie, who married May Ellithorpe and, prior to joining the armed forces in WWII, took over Sundre Transport from his father-in-law, Ralph, also wrote a book, "Haze Over Blue Hill".

1906 Sigvart and Johanna Sande

Sigvart Sande and Johanna Person met in the little settlement we know as Bergen when Sigvart moved from his brother's holdings in the Eagle Hill district. He established his own homestead in the Bergen area, using the only tool he had, an axe, in order to fulfill the land clearing requirements for title to his land.

On June 24, 1908, Sigvart and Johanna were married in the Persons' garden, in what would be the first wedding to take place in the Bergen district. Johanna moved onto her husband's land, where by 1910, he replaced their little shack with a house. It was in this house that the couple's four daughters were born: Hannah, Selma, Bessie and Irene.

Roads were built in the area over the years and eventually the Bergen School was established. The three eldest Sande girls were among the first pupils and they spoke only Norwegian. Luckily, their teacher, Lena Meckelborg, was able to understand and to communicate with them. The Bergen School, with many of its original fittings and materials, along with bell-tower and bell, is now located on the grounds of the Sundre Pioneer Village Museum.

1906 E.W. (Ed) and Arthur Miller

E.W. Miller was born near Ipswich, Suffolk, England, on June 2, 1887. When he was eighteen he emigrated to Canada, arriving in Medicine Hat in the spring of 1906, where he was met by his brother Arthur, who had been in Canada for two years. Travelling to Olds, they then turned west and made their way to the Lobley district, where they would file claims on homesteads.

In 1912, Ed became secretary of the newly formed Waterloo Municipality. He held that position for fifty years and set the Alberta record for continuous service in one job. Also in 1912, he married Annie Curtis Clayton, who was also an immigrant from England. The couple had ten children over the following years, these included: Annie (Ferguson), Lila (Wiggins), Edith (Milburn), Mildred (McGonigal), Doris (Ferguson), Frank and Albert. The three other children born to the Millers died before reaching adulthood. Annie Miller died in 1935 and Ed eventually remarried, taking the former Mrs. Nettie Tateson as his wife.

As the years progressed, Ed Miller would become the owner of one of the few cars in the

area. He was often called on to transport those with medical emergencies to Olds and he did so without hesitation and very often without compensation as many people of the area had little in the way of cash or goods for trade. Ed wore out several Model A and Model T Fords due to the rough conditions often involved in these trips, but no one ever heard him complain.

E.W. Miller, with his quiet, helpful ways and his easy smile, was not a mover and shaker in the usual sense of the expression, but as long time administrator to his municipality and as a good friend and neighbour in his community, he made a difference in the lives of many of the people who knew him. In his own easy-going way, he became one of the area's early local heroes, and his contribution to the district and to the Sundre community was recognised with the naming of the E.W. Miller School in Sundre.

Ed Miller continued to serve his community well into his senior years. At the age of seventy-four, in 1961, he was elected as Division Four County Councillor for the newly established County of Mountain View and he stayed in this position until retiring in 1963.

Ed's second wife, Nettie, died in 1963 and Ed continued alone until his death in 1973 at the age of eighty-six.

1906 The Bloxham Family

Charles Byron Bloxham, along with his wife, Minerva and their three children, Roy, Daniel and Willis, arrived in the Bearberry in 1906 from Iowa, USA. Their fourth child, Madge, had died of tuberculosis. Although he would become somewhat of a local legend in his own right, due to his moonshine making abilities, Charles brought a measure of fame with him to the Bearberry by claiming famous Indian fighter, William Cody (Buffalo Bill), as his great-great grandfather.

Charles and each of his sons filed on a quarter section, three of them on 16-33-7-W5 and the fourth on the adjoining section 15. Minerva didn't stay long with her family, returning instead to Iowa to care for her aging mother. A short time later Minerva and her mother moved up to Rimbey and Dudley Bloxham also started farming in that area.

Charles continued homesteading in the Bearberry area, with Mrs. Mary Day, accompanied by her daughter, Florence, moving in with him as his housekeepers.

Sadly, by 1930, Charles found himself unable to meet his financial responsibilities and he was forced to give up his Bearberry quarter section. He and Mrs. Day moved to her home in Didsbury until they both passed away in 1936.

Charles's youngest son, Willis Cody, who married Mary Day's second daughter, Martha, died in a logging accident in 1941 at the age of fifty-two. Roy remained a bachelor and farmed near Rimbey until his death in 1957. Dan and his first family farmed a few miles west of Olds. He remarried after the death of his first wife and died in 1973.

1906 Frank Fry

Among some of the more colourful characters that arrived in the Bearberry in the early years was a man named Frank Fry. However, while most of those who "danced to the beat of a different drum" were merely a little more unconventional than most, Frank was soon discovered to be an opportunist and a thief. Filing on a homestead – the SW¼-24-33-7-W5 in 1906, he began to steal the precious possessions of his neighbours almost immediately. Yet, for all his unlawful ways, he was known as a generous man who would give you the coat off his back if you were in need. This conflicting combination of dishonesty and kindness is apparent in a story that could legitimately be labelled "The Great Train Robbery"! By all accounts, Frank was returning to his homestead after a trip and was driving his team and wagon close to some railroad tracks. Noticing the door of a stationary freight car open, he pulled alongside to take a peek inside. Finding the car loaded with sacks of flour, each weighing one hundred pounds, he quickly filled his wagon to capacity and headed west at a brisk pace. Once he had crossed the Red Deer River, he stopped at every settler home along the trail and dropped off a sack of flour. While his neighbours might have been thankful for the unexpected gifts, knowing Frank, they must also have harboured some concerns as to the source. Apparently, Frank was eventually apprehended by the law and received his due punishment.

1906 Charlie Church

Charlie Church homesteaded in the Bearberry on the NW¼-14-33-7-W5.

Formerly a resident of the USA, he filed his Bearberry claim in 1906 and soon became known

as an honest man and a hard worker. He also earned a solid reputation as a miserly individual, who would even deprive himself of food in order to save money. Charlie ate very sparingly all week, but on Sundays he would make up for it by selecting one of several households to "stop by" for a visit. The choice would be based on a simple criteria – the home had to have a female doing the cooking!

Charlie didn't trust banks and so it is to be assumed that when he was harvesting away from home, as he often was, he carried his money on his person or stashed it somewhere amongst his belongings. One fall, he had a long run of harvesting in the Dakotas and his earnings were likely quite considerable. His habits of hoarding and hiding his money may well have resulted in his demise, for Charlie never returned to his Bearberry homestead. His neighbours eventually concluded that the poor fellow must have been murdered for his money, with his body disposed of quietly in some out of the way location.

The Church homestead stood empty for quite some time before eventually being sold to recover unpaid taxes.

1906 Bert Ballard

Born in 1885 in Deptford, Kent, England, Herbert George Ballard was nineteen years of age when he left his homeland to begin a new life in Canada. Arriving in Ontario, he spent only a month there before starting to make his way west.

Eventually arriving in Olds, Alberta, with a man he had become acquainted with en route, he located a land office and the pair filed, sight unseen, on separate quarters in the Sunberry Valley, west of the Red Deer River. Arriving at SW $\frac{1}{4}$ -10-33-6-W5, Bert looked over his land and was filled with hope for the future. He immediately set to work building his log cabin and cattle shelters.

Thirteen years later, in 1921, Bert gave up his bachelor days and married Veronica Todd of Lethbridge. In the years that followed, they had three children, Dorothy, Mary and Harold.

1906 Robert McKoewn

Robert (Bob) J.W. McKoewn moved to the Bearberry Valley shortly after arriving in Calgary from Ontario in 1906. He filed on the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ -22-33-7-W5.

Ten years went by and Bob had grown restless. In 1916 he left the Bearberry and moved to

Vancouver, where it is said he met Ivor and Isabelle Kjos. Isabelle was a teacher and the story goes that when Bob told her of the school that was to open in the Bearberry Valley she and her husband showed a keen interest. Ultimately, they sold their Vancouver property to Bob and he sold them his Bearberry homestead. Isabelle Kjos would become the first teacher of the new Bearberry School.

1906 Robert (Bob) Hogg

Robert Hogg, along with his father and a brother, crossed the Atlantic from Scotland in 1906 on the ocean liner "Mauritania". On arriving in Montreal twelve days later, the threesome boarded a train bound for Western Canada. Their first stopping place was High River, where Bob's uncle had already established a homestead. Bob and his brother liked the idea of owning their own land so they purchased a team and wagon and headed north to the settlement of Olds and then west towards the mountains. They forded the Red Deer River at the McDougall Crossing, in the little settlement that three years later would carry the name of Sundre, and continued towards the foothills.

The brothers both filed on quarters on the Bearberry Creek in the Sunberry Valley. Bob homesteaded the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ -4-33-6-W5. He sold his land during the First World War and went to live in Picton, Ontario.

1906/07 Luther, Jenny and Reginald Bishop

Luther Bishop, born 1864, and his wife, Jenny, born 1857/58, came to Canada from England in the late 1890's, settling for a while in Quebec and then moving to the USA. In 1906, they returned to Canada, with their son, Reginald, born in 1884, and after a short stay in Calgary, began homesteading in the Bearberry Valley. Being a carpenter by trade, Luther was soon able to put up a home for the family on the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ 22-33-7-W5. An adjoining quarter section, SW-22-33-7-W5, was filed in Reginald's name.

Jenny Bishop became Bearberry Postmistress and served in that capacity for seven years. Luther and Reg hauled the mail by team and buggy to and from Sundre, along the trail that followed the meandering Bearberry Creek. There was just one mail haul a week initially, but by 1915 it was necessary to make two trips a week.

In 1917, Reg Bishop married Margaret Larkin, whose family had left Great Britain in 1903, and the couple produced five children: Hazel, Ivy, Henry, Lawrence and Virginia.

Another family member, Con Walter Bishop, a cousin to Reg, also homesteaded in the Bearberry, but after only a few years, he gave up his land and left the area.

Luther and Jenny sold their land to Mr. and Mrs. Wilfred Helmer and moved onto the Bert Plumb place for a time, while Luther completed some carpentry work for him. In 1935, they moved to Innisfail and Luther died the same year at age seventy-one. Jenny died at the age of eighty-three in 1940/41.

Reginald Bishop died in 1976, at the age of ninety-two.

1906 or 1908 Henry and Margaret Arnew and Fred Jeannot

Fred Jeannot was born in Michigan on February 22, 1894 to Margaret and Fred Jeannot. His mother remarried and around 1906 she and her husband, Henry Arnew, moved to the James River district. Fred became a founding member of the Sundre Rodeo Committee in 1919 and would remain involved in that organization for many years. In 1925 he married Pearl Fletcher. The couple had two children, Edward, born in 1925, and Fay, born in 1932.

According to available records, in 1931 Fred took over the Hagen Store from N.T. Hagen, in partnership with John Macleod. He was appointed as Postmaster.

In 1934, Fred built the first house in Sundre to have modern plumbing. He and his wife welcomed student ministers and teachers to their home once a week to use the big bathtub. In 1938 Fred and Pearl sold their home to Rod Macleod. Many years later, this large home was operated as an animal clinic by Pioneer Veterinary Services, and then, when a new clinic was built on the west end of Sundre, was converted to a restaurant. Outlaw's Bar and Grill continues to serve the public today.

After selling his home and retiring as Post Master, Fred and Pearl and their family moved to California. Each year, at Rodeo time, they returned to Sundre to take in the event and to visit with friends and neighbours, among them, long time friends Nate and Bessie Ellithorpe. Even after Pearl passed away in May 1983, Fred continued to visit Sundre at Stampede time, until failing health prevented him from doing so.

1907 The Russells

Sylvan Ross Russell was born in Idagrove, Iowa in 1891. In 1907, at only sixteen years old, he began homesteading in the idyllic setting of the Sunberry Valley, west of the little settlement of Sundre. Sylvan's brother, Bob, who would later marry Ruth Wheatcroft, took the adjoining quarter section and the two buckled down to the work that would lead to full ownership of their lands. A third brother, Carmen remained in the USA.

In 1915 Sylvan married Henrietta Sandlin. Two daughters were born of this union, Violet in 1916 and Margaret in 1917. Henrietta left her husband and family in 1921 and Sylvan remained single for several years before marrying his housekeeper, Ida Wagner. Ida was born in 1900 and had come to the Russell homestead from Edson, Alberta. Her family had arrived in Canada as immigrants from Romania, where they had been wine merchants. In 1931, a son, Ross, was born to Sylvan and Ida and the family was complete.

When Sylvan suffered a fatal heart attack in October 1946, Ross quit school in order to assist his mother with the feeding of the huge cattle herd the family had accumulated. He married Annie Botham in 1953 and they had one daughter, Sylvia.

Violet Russell married Ivan Darling in 1939 and they had a son, Burke, but Ivan passed away following a heart attack in December 1946 – only two months after the death of Violet's father. In 1953, Violet married Peter Temple and the couple moved to Olds.

Margaret Russell married twice, but both marriages failed and she finally moved to Vancouver.

Ida Russell died in February 1955 and, a few years later, Ross and Annie Russell separated. Ross continued to live on the family homestead for many years.

1907 The David E. Weston Family

David Weston purchased a homestead in the Bearberry and he and his family moved from the United States in 1907 to take possession. David was a hard worker and within three years he had fulfilled his commitment to "prove up" the place, thus taking full ownership of the property. A short while later he purchased a small sawmill operation, close to the settlement of Sundre, but by 1916 he sold

everything and the family returned to the USA.

1907 The George Myers Family

Mr. and Mrs. George Myers and their son, Bert, all from the USA, homesteaded close to the creek in the Bearberry area in 1907. They built a one- and- a- half story log home, which was a very common practice as it allowed for an attic bedroom for the children, with the heat from the stovepipe providing warmth. Bert struck out on his own two years later, filing on the NE1/4-3-34-7-W5, where he lived with his wife and daughter until the entire Myers family returned to the States in 1913.

1907 The Norman Arnesons

The family of Norman Arneson moved from Minnesota, USA, into the Eagle Hill District in 1907. In his youth, Norman was a steer rider and was a competitor in the early days of the Sundre Stampede. By 1935, at the height of the Great Depression, Norman was ready to settle down. He married Joyce Fryling and for their honeymoon, they travelled to Burnstick Lake, where they shot muskrat during the day and slept in an old cabin by night. Their land was ten miles west of the present community of James River Bridge.

In the fall of each year, Norman and Joyce hunted, and Joyce shot her first moose in 1935. In the wintertime, they trapped.

During the Second World War, the couple left the homestead but they returned to land in the Crammond area when the war was over, where they raised their family. For five years they operated the Crammond Store. The Arneson homesteads were eventually sold to the Pekse family.

1907 Herbert A. Plumb

Herbert Plumb was born in England in 1885. The fact that he was educated at Hailebury College at this time in history suggests he came from a wealthy family and might have been what was known as a remittance man. At the age of twenty-one, he left England and worked his way across Canada, finally arriving in Olds, where he met Irishman and remittance man, Pat Johnson. Pat had heard that the Bearberry area had lots of open range and a good supply of water. The pair joined forces and travelled to the Bearberry Valley.

Bert filed on the NE¼ 28-33-7-W5th in 1907. The little cabin he built there was whitewashed inside and out, which perhaps was an early indication of the young man's emerging

eccentricity. In 1911, he married Daisy Battensby and one child, Betty, was born to them.

With the start of WWI, the little family returned to England, where Bert joined the Royal Air Force in order to serve his country in its time of need. They did not return to Canada until 1922, at which time they purchased a home in Edmonton while a new home was being built for them in Bearberry. But Daisy did not want to return to the Bearberry. Instead, she and Betty moved to Vancouver to be near her parents. The couple were never reunited.

In the years that followed in the fine new Bearberry home, a variety of housekeepers worked for Mr. Plumb. One of these was Daisy Snow, who was hired in 1936. Daisy was originally from England and had two sons; one of these, Arthur, also joined the household in order to take care of Bert's registered racehorses. The relationship between Daisy and her employer apparently blossomed into something more and soon Greta Tomlinson became the housekeeper while Daisy helped Bert design and build the beautiful gardens that became legendary in the area.

Bert hired Sam Ancell to oversee the farm work and to manage his herd of Hereford cattle. In the meantime, he focussed his energies on cultivating the quarter section and became the first in the district to have an experimental plot seeded to grass. When representatives of the Olds Agricultural College came out to inspect the plot in the fall, Bert and Daisy hosted a field day, with over one hundred people attending.

Although considered quite eccentric by his neighbours, Mr. Plumb was well liked, and when he died suddenly in August 1942, at the age of fifty-seven, the entire community was saddened.

Daisy Snow died in Berwyn, Alberta, in 1976 at the age of ninety-two.

1907 John McIntosh

John McIntosh homesteaded in the Bearberry from 1907. He became one of the first county councillors of the area. There is a standing joke, which persists even today, that county councillors always have good road in front of the land they live on. Perhaps this evolved from the early days, when it is said that each time a new councillor took office, one of the first things he did was to arrange to have a new road built – usually along the trail leading to his home! Apparently, John McIntosh was happy to comply with this policy!

John's brother-in-law, Dan McMillan, was also his neighbour and the two proved up their homesteads at roughly the same time. They also left the area to move to Vancouver at the same time, John selling his land to the Sarles brothers and Dan selling his to Eugene Montauf.

1907 Albert and Hilda Olson

Albert Olson, born in Sand Creek, Wisconsin, was the oldest son of George and Trena Olson. Hilda Person was the oldest daughter of Jens and Marie Person and was born in Story City, Iowa. The two married in 1900 and three daughters were born to them: Mildred, Esther and Helma.

Albert sold his farm in Wisconsin to his brother, and in the spring of 1907, with his wife and family, the youngest child being only three months old, boarded a rail car and headed to Alberta. On arriving at the little Bergen community, the family settled in with Hilda's family, who had moved there in 1905. Albert worked on his homestead, NW-2-32-5-5, which joined the Persons' land on the north. He cleared some land and built a cabin while Hilda carried out the many duties that fall on a pioneer woman and took care of the children, who were soon joined by a little brother, Reuben. Hilda became active in the Bergen Ladies Aid, which was founded by her mother, Marie, and the group is still going strong one hundred years later.

* Note:

Reuben Olson, the youngest child of the Albert Olsons, continues to make his home in Bergen in 2007. He is a much loved member of that community and will always be remembered for his wonderful heavy horse teams, his fine workmanship as a harness maker and his quiet, gentle sense of humour. Reuben married Esther Erickson, the daughter of area settlers Ivor and Olava Erickson, in 1956, when they were both in their mid-forties. Esther, like Reuben, was born and raised in the area and they both attended the Eidswold and Bergen schools when they were growing up. Born in 1911, Esther was the first woman in the Bergen area to purchase a quarter of land and also the first woman in that community to acquire a driver's licence. She passed away in April 2007.

Reuben, born in 1910, remains a dedicated member of the Sundre Historical Society, and takes great pride in seeing the old Bergen School House, so filled with memories of his past, as a permanent fixture in the museum grounds. Having lived for almost one hundred years is an amazing feat in itself, but to have been born into one of the first settler families in the district; to

have endured the challenges and rewards of the early pioneering life and to have witnessed the unfolding of history on one of Canada's last frontiers is an incredible accomplishment indeed.

1907 Joe Silvester

Joe Silvester and his son homesteaded in the Bearberry area in 1907 on NW¼ -3-34-7-W5. They resided there for several years before moving to the prairies.

1908 John Mallinson

John and Bill Mallinson left their home in Cumberland, Northern England, for Canada in 1904. For a while they worked for the Canadian Pacific Railway, earning the princely sum of fourteen cents per hour. Plodding ever westward, they eventually found work with a telephone line construction company in Regina and the experience they gathered on this job enabled them to find this type of work for many years to come.

By September 1908, the brothers had made their way to Olds, Alberta, en route to the James River-Eagle Point area homesteads that Bill had picked out for them on an earlier visit to the West Country.

The brothers set up a tent on their land, and on their first day on the new frontier, John chopped down sixty trees, which would be used to build a log shack, while Bill visited their closest neighbours, the Ashmeads, to learn how to make bread.

John Mallinson left the area in 1911, but in 1915, returned to his homestead with his new bride, Laura Louise Bainbridge. Coincidentally, Laura and the Mallinson boys had attended the same school in England.

After only a year, John and Laura sold their Eagle Point land and moved to Canada's west coast. However, they weren't happy there and returned to the Derbys town area, renting land from a Mr. Elgy, who was the butter maker at the Derbys town Creamery. The couple had three children: Laura Louise, Ada Alberta and William John. Laura Louise senior passed away in 1945 and John later retired and moved to Sundre where he lived into his nineties.

There is very little further information available on John's brother, Bill.

1908 Isaac and Flora Ann Winter and Family

It took Isaac and Flora Ann Winter and family, from the Sacramento Valley in California, three

long years to make their way by wagon train to Alberta, Canada. Bringing with them all their worldly possessions, their oxen and their mules, they spent their last US winter in Snake River, Idaho and then proceeded northward again, finally arriving in Calgary, Alberta, in March 1908. By the end of that year the Winters' eldest sons, William (Bill) and MacDonald (Mac), located the land office and Bill filed on the NE¼-9-33-7-W5 in the Sunberry Valley while Mac filed on the SE¼ of the same section. The family, including younger son, Isaac Henry (Harry) and daughters Flora and Judith, moved onto the land. It was also in 1914 that Bill and Mac enlisted to fight in World War One. Only one of the brothers, Bill, was able to return to the beautiful valley west of Sundre as Mac was killed in action shortly after returning from a leave spent with his family.

Harry Winter married in 1917 and the wedding dance was held at the McDougal schoolhouse, on the Sundre Flats. Local settlers provided the music; the darkness was lit by coal oil lanterns, and coffee was brewed in a wash boiler – a large tub normally used for boiling white laundry on top of the cook stove but sometimes used in cheese making and occasionally in brewing homemade beer!

A few months after Harry's wedding, in the early part of 1918, both Flora Ann and Isaac passed away.

In 1956, Bill died at the age of seventy-three and Harry died in 1972, aged eighty-three.

1908 Shorty Bryan

Shorty Bryan homesteaded in the Bearberry area in 1908 but left after a few years and is believed to have resided in the Didsbury area until his death a short time later.

1908 & 1909 Jim and Fred Elder

Jim and Fred Elder were twin brothers who were born in Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1889.

Fred was the first of the two to file on a homestead in the Bearberry area – the NE¼ -4-33-7-W5 – in 1908. Jim filed a year later on the NW¼-2-33-7-W5. About thirteen years later, a third brother, William, moved into the same area.

Jim was a cabinetmaker by trade and had brought all his tools with him from Scotland. He was to lose all of them when a fire destroyed his first home some years later.

The Elder twins, both hard of hearing from

birth, remained bachelors for quite some time, acquiring more land as they were able and farming it together. Then in 1943, Jim married Maria Lydia Smith, who was thirty-two years his junior and moved her into the home he had built to replace the one that burned. His twin also married eventually, but Bill remained a bachelor all his life.

Jim Elder passed away in 1955 at the age of sixty-six. His young widow re-married the following year.

1909 Hans Hermanson

Four members of the Hermanson family, originally from Norway, left their home in the USA in 1908 and travelled to Alberta. Eventually settling in the Bearberry area. The elder Hermanson and his son, Hans, both filed on quarters in the same section, 15-33-7-W5.

With the start of WWI, Hans and August Hermanson both enlisted and were sent overseas. Sadly, young August was killed in action. Hans survived the war and returned to Canada with an English bride. The couple did not stay in the Bearberry, moving first to Didsbury and then back to the USA to live in Seattle, Washington. They had one daughter, Martha.

1909 Frank and Henry Ferris

The Ferris brothers were born in Devonshire, England. They left their birthplace for Ontario, Canada in 1908 and in 1909 moved west to Alberta, settling in the Lobley district. Their sister, Mary Ellen, joined them in 1910 and two years later she married local settler William Niddrie.

Henry Ferris was killed in 1917, during World War One, at Vimy Ridge. Frank married Ellen Knapman, from England, and remained on the original homestead until his death in 1964.

1909 Bill and Bob Logan

Bill Logan probably never dreamed that at the age of twenty-one years he would be required to take on the responsibility of providing for a ready-made family.

Bill's mother, who with her new husband, John Logan, had come to New Brunswick from Ireland, died when Bill was only two, following the birth of a second child, Mary. John Logan remarried – a widow with one son, Harry. The couple produced three more children, Jack, Charles and Bob.

When Bill was eighteen, he headed west and

began working on the railroad. The line connecting the west coast and Calgary had yet to be completed and there was a great demand for strong young men. When his stepmother died a short time later, he returned to New Brunswick for a visit. A short while after that, his father passed away. Bill and sister Mary, now nineteen, decided to bring the children, aged eleven, nine, seven and five, to Calgary. Bill continued to work for the railroad.

After most of their younger siblings had grown up and left home, Mary went to work in Banff, while Bill began ranching in Penticton, BC. The youngest brother, Bob, at only thirteen, went to work on a ranch at Jumping Pound, but after a few years, moved to Banff and worked for Jim Brewster until establishing his own guiding and outfitting company. In 1909, he and Bert Sibble moved onto land on the Red Deer River, west of Sundre. They built the original buildings that would one day be part of the Red Deer River Ranger Station. Bob raised Percheron and Clydesdale horses and Bert raised saddle horses. Unfortunately, an epidemic of swamp fever wiped out most of the better mares a couple of years later.

In 1911, Bill returned from BC and purchased the ranch from Bob and his friend for one thousand dollars. Bob ranched at Jumping Pound for a while, continuing his guiding operation until 1915, when he married Mabel Pepper, from Cochrane. Following the birth of their first child, Eric, the couple bought a place west of Sundre at Coal Camp. Shortly after the birth of their second son, Roy, the home they had built was destroyed by fire. By the time of the birth their third son, Rex, who was destined to make his name in rodeo competition, the family was heading into serious financial trouble. Cattle prices began to plummet and by the following spring, the bank foreclosed on the loan and repossessed the cattle. The ranch was sold to Wilf and Rita Helmer and Bob and his family moved to Banff, where another child, Audrey, was born.

A few years after his wife died, in 1935, Bob returned to the Sundre area, buying a quarter section at McDougal Flats. He sold it in 1953 and moved his small cabin to an acre of land he purchased from Tilford Hagen of Sundre. That same year, he passed away. All of Bob's children, with the exception of Eric, who settled in BC, eventually returned to Sundre to live.

1910 - Alex Currie Family

Arriving from Illinois, USA, to the James River

District around 1910, the Currie family acquired the last available homestead parcel along the James River. Alex Currie was the foreman for the rebuilding of the Derbytown (Niddrie/Fletcher) Bridge after the Great Flood of 1915.

1910 Eugene Montauf

Although he came to Canada from Germany, Eugene O. Montauf was proud to call himself a British subject who had served in the British Navy. He arrived in the Bearberry Valley in 1910 and began homesteading. His mother, Mrs. Von Smithe, and his half-brother Aberhart, also lived in the Bearberry area.

Several years after his arrival, Eugene traded his Bearberry homestead and moved onto the Joe Anderson place on the Sundre Flats. From there he moved close to the Little Red Deer River.

1910 Doctor W.R. McMurtry

Although they did not move onto their homestead until 1916, veterinarian William McMurtry and his family filed on the Bearberry quarter, SW $\frac{1}{4}$ -27-33-7-W5, in 1910.

William and Mary McMurtry (nee Stanley) came to Calgary, Alberta, in 1907, from a rural district of Ottawa, Ontario. They had previously lived in Michigan, USA, where the first two of their five children, David and Eleanor, were born. Two more children, Charles and Edna, were born in Ontario and the couple's fifth child, Donald, was born in Alberta.

After a short stay in Calgary, the family moved to Olds where William had a veterinary practice, not a well paying profession in those days.

Money was a scarce commodity for most area homesteaders and although Dr. McMurtry often accepted payment in products such as eggs, chickens, meat and vegetables, these did not help him pay his own bills. He stayed with the practice in Olds for five years but then the decision was made to move on, and the family moved first to McDougal Flats and then to the Bearberry quarter they had filed on six years earlier. They lived in a small log shack that was located on the banks of a little creek. Apparently, William did not pursue his veterinary career any further and was content to focus on the homestead and his family. Mary kept a few chickens and a good Jersey milk cow. She often walked miles to assist a sick neighbour and, despite the many hardships and some early misgivings, she came to love the Bearberry

settlement and the people who were her neighbours.

Dr. William McMurtry died in 1944. Mary was ninety-six when she passed away in 1966.

1910 John and Emily Rose

Arriving in the James River area from Chicago in 1910, John and Emily Rose had made their long journey with several other families. The couple would raise six children on their land, the later years being spent on the holdings they had purchased near the James River Bridge. When the James River School was built in 1921, the Rose family, who lived close by, often opened their home to board the various teachers who were posted there. In 1962, the Roses retired from farming and moved to Olds.

1910 Karl and "Belle" Pekse and Family

Mr. and Mrs. Karl Pekse were both born in Latvia in 1888. Along with their children, Fred (1904) and Mike (1908), they emigrated to Canada in 1910. Stopping for a short while to work in Medicine Hat, Alberta, Karl then moved to the Lobley district, close to where his younger brother, Fred, had recently filed on a quarter section of land.

A third son for the Pekse's, John, arrived in 1912, but he died before reaching his second birthday. The family worked hard on their land and by 1914 they moved into their new cabin, where a fourth son, Theodore, was born a few months later.

Belle Pekse soon became well known as the local midwife. Over the years, she delivered one hundred and eighteen babies and never lost a patient.

In due course, Karl and Belle retired to Sundre and, in 1952, Belle passed away. Karl died in 1966.

Of the Pekse children, Fred married Elsie Keim in 1926 and they would have one child, Dorothy, in 1930. Fred served on the Council of the County of Waterloo for twenty-three years and also served as Reeve. The County of Waterloo was eventually amalgamated into the County of Mountain View (now Mountain View County). Fred died in 1967.

Mike never married and for many years continued to live in the Lobley district. Theodore (Ted), and his wife Stella, had one child, Elaine, and they made their home just south of Calgary.

1910 Fred Pekse Family

Born in Latvia, Fred Pekse was brother to Karl Pekse. For several years after emigrating to the USA he worked at various jobs on the railways, in sawmills and as a ranch hand. It was in South Dakota that he met and married Natalie Adler, a young widow with a baby girl, Alma. Natalie was the daughter of Martin Rosehill, who would, in 1910, join Fred and his family in settling land at the confluence of the Stony Creek and the James River near Sundre, Alberta.

The Pekse family, which had now grown to include a son, Rudolph (1909), rented a log cabin from Mr. Litten. The Litten place was about a mile from where the Pekse family were developing their homestead and the Martin Rosehill place was adjacent to it.

In 1915, a second son, Edward, was born to Fred and Natalie. This was the year of the catastrophic flood that wiped out the bridges at Derbystown and at Sundre. Fred and Natalie lost ten acres of hard earned cropland to the raging floodwaters, along with their garden area.

The following winter was a harsh one. The Pekses had no stored vegetables to see them through the season and they had very little in the way of feed for the livestock. Fred's savings, which he had brought from the US, had dwindled to nothing. There was no government assistance at that time. Things looked bleak for the family. However, Fred's father-in-law, Martin, came to the rescue with a good stash of potatoes and Fred, the victim of nature's fury the year before, took advantage of nature's bounty and fed his family on bush rabbits. In 1916, the family began making plans to relocate the farmstead to higher ground.

In 1921, before the new buildings were completed, Natalie Pekse passed away. It was a devastating blow to the little family but they had to make a choice – give up or go on. Like many settlers before and after them, they chose to go on.

In 1925, Fred re-married. Soon after, he and his new wife, Justine (Patrawitz) became the parents of a son, George.

Alma Pekse married Jack Gulbe and they farmed five miles west of Olds. Rudolph purchased the Olzenberg place and ranched there until he passed away in 1958. Edward married Violet Runham in 1943 and purchased the Ray Toole place. George married Julia Semaka and with their daughter, Sandra, they ranched for many years in partnership with Fred on the original homestead.

1910 The Peter Bowman Family

Mr. and Mrs. Peter Bowman and family hailed from Moscow, Idaho, and arrived as pioneers in the Mound/Eagle Valley district in 1910. Peter was sixty-three years of age at that time, and his sons did most of the work involved in clearing the required thirty acres in order to prove up the homestead. The Bowmans had seven children when they came to the area, the oldest, Cornelius, born in 1892, and the youngest, Laurence, born in 1908.

Over the years that followed, the family would increase to a total of eleven children.

Cornelius served in the First World War, and on his return to civilian life he married Gladys Graham. The couple settled into their homestead at Lobley. By 1921, Cornel, as he was known locally, and Gladys had a little son, Eric. In December 1921, tragedy struck Cornel's family when a fire destroyed their barn, and nineteen head of cattle were lost, as well as all the winter feed. The loss for the young family was insurmountable and they left the district.

The Peter Bowmans continued to live in the Mound district and in 1924 their son, Laurence, was nineteen years old. In January of that year, tragedy would again strike the family. Cornel had returned briefly to the area and was working with his young brother, sawing logs west of Sundre. A rotten tree, perhaps propelled by a sudden gust of wind, fell noiselessly and with deadly accuracy. Laurence was in its path. He died from head injuries while being transported by his family to obtain medical attention.

The Cornel Bowmans returned to the Sundre area around 1925-26 after a two-year stay in Oregon, USA. They settled in the Eagle Valley and Cornel and Gladys remained there until their retirement to Sundre in 1953. Cornelius died in 1972 at the age of eighty.

1910 John Smith Family

John Smith homesteaded the NE quarter of 18-33-5-5 around 1910. His wife was the former Anlize Gulbe. The couple had eight children: Charlie, Jack, Fred, August, Walter, Arvid, Julia (Lekter) and Lena (Bauman). The Eagle Point School, which was eventually relocated to Sundre, was built in 1928 on the land first settled by the Smith family. Around 1919, the Smith family left the district to live north of Olds.

1910 The Botham Family

Mr. and Mrs. G.R. Botham came from a distinctly middle-upper class background in Bedford, England. Being used to managing a large household of servants and governesses at her country home, Mrs. Botham, more than most, must have found the new frontier extremely daunting at first.

In 1910, the family moved to the Eagle Hill district, near Sundre. Two years later they relocated to the Lobley area. Mrs. Botham's skills at managing a large household perhaps gave her a certain edge when it came to managing the daily activities of a busy homestead and, by enlisting the help of the children, she soon had things running smoothly: Monday was washday; Tuesday was ironing day; Wednesday was mending day; Thursday and Friday were upstairs cleaning days and Saturdays were downstairs cleaning and baking days. On Sundays, only those chores that were essential were carried out.

The Botham children were: George, Allan, Major, Frank, Doris, Blanche, Maude and Bert.

1910 The Gulbe Family

In 1910, Fred and Zette Gulbe, along with their son, John and his wife Julia, and the younger couple's two sons, moved into the Lobley District. That same year, John and Julia welcomed a daughter into their family.

John's cousin, Fred Gulbe, his wife, Matilda, and children, Lena, Charles, Conrad (Jack) and Emma, also set up homesteading north of Sundre that year.

Matilda Gulbe died in 1938 and Fred then made his home with Jack and family. He died in 1942.

1910 The Neil Smith Family

Mr. and Mrs. Neil Smith raised their family of five children in Lachine, Quebec. In 1910, two of the sons, Fred and Warren, accompanied by their parents, moved into the Bearberry district to set up homesteads, with Neil filing on SE1/4-3-33-7-W5 and Fred on SW1/4-2-33-7-W5. Warren filed on the NE1/4 35-32-7-W5 in 1911.

The family home was built on Fred's land and the family worked together to develop the respective lands. For many years, "Smith's Corner" was a well-known landmark to area settlers. The little creek that meandered through the Smith holdings was eventually named "Smith Creek".

Warren and Fred never married and did all

their farming with horses. With their father, they raised Hereford cattle. Neil was a councillor for the Municipal District of Waterloo, serving several terms, and Warren also served in this capacity during the 1940's.

Neil Smith died in the 1920's and Fred died in 1946. Warren was seventy-six at the time of his death in 1969.

1910 The Bolander Family

The Bolanders travelled west from Ontario in 1898 and settled on a homestead in the Didsbury/Carstairs area. Once they were old enough, the four sons in the family spread their wings and began to work on their own homesteads. Hank (Henry) and Bill (William) and Cook (Addison) all filed on lands in the Bearberry/Sunberry Valleys from 1910 on. Mose (Oliver) also lived in the valley but there is very little information on him. Bill and Hank farmed their lands together.

Hank (Henry), who owned SW $\frac{1}{4}$ -20-33-6-W5, married Inez Dole in 1918. They had two sons, Harry and Hiawatha.

Bill married Lola Miller in 1937. The couple homesteaded SW $\frac{1}{4}$ -32-33-6-W5.

Cook (Addison) married Irene Harper and the couple had 4 children. They homesteaded at NE $\frac{1}{4}$ -19-33-6-W5 but eventually moved to British Columbia.

1910 Steve and Bessie Craig

Steve Craig was a typical long, tall Texan with a soft southern drawl. A very handsome man, he was known for his charming personality. He was also well known for the bullet holes in his left ear and his penchant for a little cattle rustling when his pantry started to look bare. It wasn't that Steve didn't have his own cattle; he just preferred the taste of his neighbour's better!

Born in 1875 at Hillsboro, Texas, Steve Craig was thirty-five years old when he began homesteading in the Sunberry Valley. He fled the USA several years prior to this, believing he had killed a man in a gunfight. Like most wanted men, which is what he believed himself to be, he was constantly looking over his shoulder. Perhaps he felt the Sunberry/Bearberry area was far enough away from civilization that he would be safe from the long arm of the law because he stayed in the area for extended periods of time before selling the homestead in 1920. By this time, Steve was married. He had advertised for a wife and caught

the attention of an Englishwoman named Bessie Spencer, who was living in Saskatchewan. Bessie was three years Steve's senior and a governess by profession.

The middle-aged newlyweds lived for a short time near Wetaskiwin but then moved to the Sunberry homestead, where Steve built a large home for his wife, and the couple raised sheep and cattle. Bessie brought a little culture and fun into the life of her rough-and-ready Texas cowboy. She loved to play piano and soon the Craig home became known for the wonderful dances that were held there. Steve and Bessie had no children of their own, but they adopted a son, John, and many years later, when the couple were approaching old age, they adopted a daughter, Ruby. By this time they had left Central Alberta for good.

Steve was an old man when he cautiously returned to his homeland to make a long overdue visit to his sisters. While there, he learned that there had never been a price on his head, that he was not, as he had believed, a murderer. The man he thought he shot was very much alive. After more than half a lifetime of running, Steve Craig could feel safe, but the habit of "moving on" was well-entrenched and even into advanced old age, Steve continued to explore new pastures.

Bessie Craig died suddenly in 1956 at the age of eighty-four. Steve was eighty-six at the time of his death in 1961.

1910 The Sandlin Family

The Sandlin family moved to Alberta from Idaho, USA, in 1910 and homesteaded in the Lobley district. They had four sons and four daughters: Lee, Burket, Troy, Arthur, Grace, Emma, Dezzie and Henrietta. All but one, Emma, accompanied their parents to Canada. Henrietta married Sylvan Russell in 1915 and the couple had two daughters together.

In 1921, the Sandlin family, including Henrietta, whose marriage to Sylvan had ended, returned to Coeur D'Alene, Idaho. Being Canadian citizens, Henrietta's daughters, Violet and Margaret, stayed with their dad.

1910 The Jim Wells Family

The Jim Wells family, from Oklahoma, USA, arrived in the Lobley district in the spring of 1910.

1910 George Henderson

George Lewis Henderson was born at Peterhead, Scotland in 1879. He came to Canada around 1908 and, like many early settlers, made his way west across the vast country by working for the Canadian Pacific Railway. Finally arriving in Olds, George filed on land in the Bearberry Valley in 1910 and began breaking the land. The war years interrupted any further work on the homestead and George was sent overseas. When he returned to the Bearberry in 1922, he had his new Scottish bride, Jean, by his side.

Tragically, Jean died following surgery in 1949. After his wife's passing, George continued to live in the Bearberry during the summer months, but made his home in the Colonel Belcher Veterans Hospital, in Calgary, during the winters. He died in 1970 at the age of ninety-one.

Other Early Pioneers for Whom there is Little Information

Bill Reed. A Carpenter from Michigan, settled in the Derbytoun or Eagle valley area around 1902.

Alf Hefford. Came to Canada from England. Lived on the Dames farm in the Rockwood district with his two daughters. Died in 1942.

Mr. Martin (Mrs. Alf Dean's brother) – came to the area prior to 1905. Helped build the road between Sundre and James River.

Mr. Campbell. Came to the area prior to 1905. Helped build the road between Sundre and James River.

Harry Johnson Family. This family came from England and settled about ½ mile west of the Eagle Point School location. They had two daughters, Florence and Hulda. Hulda married another early pioneer, Billy Berling and the couple had nine children: Baldur, Elsie, Nell (Stevenson), Violet (Logan), Albert, Ronald, Jean, Wilma and Jim. Harry Johnson passed away in about 1934 and his wife died in 1940.

Mr. Medgaard. Mr. Medgaard was a reclusive Norwegian in his fifties who squatted in the Bearberry area for several years. He built his home by digging a hole into the bank of the riverbank, adding one small window and a slab door in the front. The chimney protruded a short distance out of the ground. By all accounts, Mr. Medgaard was a sad little man. He kept a few horses on the open range and was never known to work them or ride them. He also kept a few hens and he stored the

eggs in Myers Creek – frequent flash floods often robbed him of his refrigerated cache, sweeping the eggs downstream. The middle-aged man sometimes did odd jobs for his neighbours in order to earn a home cooked meal but, for the most part, his life and history remains somewhat of a mystery.

It is thought that when Medgaard left the Bearberry, he moved to British Columbia.

Earl & Lillian Winger. Earl and Lillian Winger and their adopted baby came to the Bearberry from Chicago, USA. Earl was a carpenter by trade and he worked away from home during the winter months. The family packed up and left quite suddenly in 1919 and their land, never homestead again, was absorbed into the green belt where it became community pastureland.

Alvie and Rosabelle Seigfried. This couple settled in the Mound district. They had two sons, Frank and Charlie. Alvie died in 1917, shortly before Charlie was born. In 1922 Rosabelle married Walter Bates, who took over the family homestead. Charlie joined the military in 1940 and later purchased the Glory and Stella Temple farm in Bearberry, which he moved onto in 1947. He farmed with the help of his uncle, Charlie Reed.

In 1961, Charlie rented his farm to his older brother, Frank while he ran a trap line in the Bow Forest Reserve. He also worked for the Parks Department for a time and helped erect some of the first picnic shelters in the Forestry lands west of Sundre.

Pearl Kinsell. Mr. Pearl Kinsell came to Canada from the USA and farmed in the Sunberry district. Like many of the early settlers, he was a bachelor and very self-sufficient. He kept a few chickens and pigs, but mostly, he was known for his small herd of milk goats. The goats kept him in milk, butter and cheese and whenever he travelled the West Country to help out his neighbours, the goats travelled with him. Pearl always travelled with his team and wagon and the goats were loaded into the wagon so that he could continue to milk them twice a day.

When Pearl passed away, he was cremated and his good friends, Mr. and Mrs. Green, from Calgary, carried out his wishes by scattering his ashes in the Sunberry Valley.

Other Early Pioneers By Date Only

1906

Alice M. Reynolds

1907
 Pat Johnston
 Bob McKeowen
 Don McMillan
 E.Odeguard
 G. Davis
 J.Brown
 H.Livingston
 G.Wilson
 Larkin Todd
 1910
 Clarence Ogen
 J.R. Ogen

Nels Martin Anderson
 Joseph M. Anderson
Family Names of Others Who Settled the Sundre Area Between 1890 and 1910
 John Hogg; Poulson; Griswold; Alex Hogg; Jones family; Bird brothers; Russell; Frazier; Young, Slim Bassett; Bob Hogg; John Jansen; Ole Anderson; John Grant; McKintosh; Bob McMillan; Art Church; Hans Hermanson; Odeguard family; Bob McKeown; Hickey; Bill Pender; Oscar Johnson; Len Broadbent; Erickson; Ed Weston; John Christenson; John Reed; Bob Cunningham; Hammer; Sandy Cummings. Frank Ross. William Battensby

No. 251230

DOMINION LANDS.

INTERIM HOMESTEAD RECEIPT.

No. 14383

Agency, _____ 190__

I Certify that I have received from Joseph Dowthwaite
Eagle Hill
 the sum of TEN Dollars, being the office fee for Homestead Entry for me
 Quarter of Section 18 Township 34 Range 3
 West of 5 Meridian, and that the said Joseph Dowthwaite
 is, in consequence of such entry and payment, vested with the rights conferred in such cases by the provisions of "The Dominion Lands Act" respecting Homestead Rights

R.D. Matheson
 Local Agent.

NOTE: This Entry is granted under and subject to the provisions of the Dominion Lands Act and its Regulations governing Homestead Entry for Dominion Lands.

1906 Interim Homestead Receipt. Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum

Sundre's First White Settler

Harry Graham and Red Deer River Ranches

Our Pioneers

I opened an old, old album,
Its covers dusty and worn,
And the pictures on the pages
Were there before I was born.

I looked at earnest faces,
At eyes steadfast and clear,
And wondered about our ancestors
And why they had come here.

Was it just for the adventure
That brought them to this land,
To cross the flooded rivers
And choke in the dust and sand.

The black flies and mosquitoes,
The scourge of swamp and slough,
That plagued their days and sleepless nights,
Yet our pioneers got through.

The weary horses plodded on,
With scarcely time to rest,
For the pioneers would not be stopped,
Their goal, the untried west.

They came from Manitoba,
And countries further still,
From homes across the ocean,
This unplowed land to till.

They must have had a vision,
Of this new land, fair and broad,
And knew that it would blossom,
When their firm hands turned the sod.

So sleep – oh sleep, so softly,
You have left no path untrod,
You pioneers of this great land,
We leave you safe with God.

– Lone Wolf

If asked who was the first settler in the Sundre area, many would say that it was David McDougall, for it is the name of this man that graces a local community centre, a church and a district, and it is land once owned by this man on which the town of Sundre stands today. However, although the arrival of David McDougall is very significant to the telling of Sundre's history, he was, in fact, the area's second official settler. The first, three years before, was a young man who had a spirit that yearned for the wildness and freedom of nature and a heart that longed for the love of a specific young woman.

Harry Graham was an old friend of the McDougall family, and also of the Niddrie and Fletcher families of Morley, who were also to become early Sundre area settlers when they laid claim to land in the Derbytowntown district. He had come to Morley from Cobourg, Ontario, in 1886, with his father and brothers.

Like the man who would come after him, on his arrival in the Sundre area in 1890, Harry initially set up camp in the area we know today as McDougal Flats. Mr. Graham soon moved to land further west on what is now the Coal Camp/Mountain Aire Lodge Road. At the confluence of the Hauling and Williams Creeks he built a small rudimentary log house with a sod roof, along with barns and shelters. He ran a small trading post to supplement his ranching income, doing business with the local Indians who frequently camped in the area. He stayed on this land, which we know today as Red Deer River Ranches, for four years. Some say he was anticipating the arrival of the woman he hoped would be his wife, but by several accounts the lady, believed to be David McDougall's eldest daughter, Georgina, told him she did not wish to live so far into the wilderness and this may well have impacted Harry's decision to leave the area. There was also the matter of a rogue grizzly bear, which frequently attacked and killed Harry's stock, and this too may have had a bearing on his choice of action.

In 1896, Mr. Graham packed up and moved east of the Big Red to where the Little Red Deer River meanders through the Westward Ho area. Here he built a beautiful large house, crafted from only the finest materials and no doubt with the woman he loved in mind. Sadly, as many a poet

has observed, the path of love does not always lead to happiness, and the story goes that despite his valiant efforts to please the young woman, Harry's proposal was rejected. Instead, Georgina married Norman Luxton and the couple took up residence in Banff. It is interesting to note, that had Georgina accepted Harry's proposal, Sundre's first white settler would have become the son-in-law of its second!

Mr. Graham sold the ranch, twenty miles southwest of Sundre, to John Morgan and Arthur Heaton in 1903 and it is believed he moved to Cochrane.



John Morgan & Arthur Heaton at the Original Ranch Building in 1904. *Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum & Gary Vooy's*

Morgan and Heaton owned the ranch until 1926 and then sold to Dick Brown, who was manager of the Sundre Stampede for several years. He ran the place until his health began to fail in 1942. At this time he moved to Calgary, selling the ranch to a big game hunter by the name of Colonel Harry Snyder who hailed from Chicago. The man was a celebrity of sorts, the story of one of his hunting expeditions having appeared in National Geographic. It is said that the colonel became a millionaire several times in his lifetime and also that at various times he lost almost everything he owned.

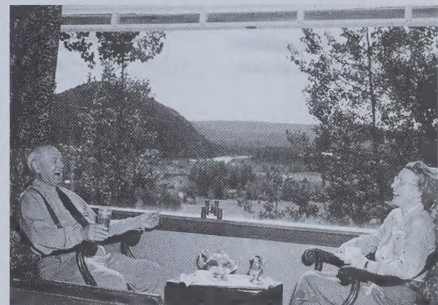
Snyder built a beautiful lodge on the property, where he lavishly entertained visiting hunters and guests from all over the world.

Many local people found work at the Snyder Ranch, which was known as the Bar 7S (also known to some as Bar 75) Ranch.

In 1953, fire destroyed the lodge and all the



The Snyder Ranch About 1942. *Photo courtesy of Lillian McGonigal*



Colonel & Mrs. Snyder - *Photo courtesy of Lillian McGonigal*

impressive hunting trophies it contained, along with a valuable collection of artwork and books. Snyder moved to Arizona, where he died in 1960. In the meantime, John and Joan Negropontes, originally exiles from Romania with the entourage of King Michael, formed a partnership with Count Ivan Batthany and his wife, Countess Margit, from Switzerland, in the ownership of the ranch. It was at this time, 1955, that the ranch was given its present name, although the spelling was arranged somewhat differently at the time. "Reddeer River Ranches Ltd." reflected Countess Margit's desire to have the ranch known as RRR. After nearly twenty years, the partnership between the two families was dissolved and John Negropontes took full ownership of the property and retained it until 1985 when he sold it to Frank and Betty Garnett and Stan Bengston. Frank was a retired oilman and the one time owner of Garnett Drilling Ltd. By 1988, the Garnetts were sole owners of the ranch and would run it for another eight years.

In 1996, Don and Esther Hanson bought Red Deer River Ranches and remain the present owners. The Property now encompasses many thousands of acres, having acquired several neighbour-

bouring properties. While it is open to guests year round, it is also a fully operational working ranch and is managed by Jason and Marci Bradley. In 2009 it is nearly one hundred and twenty years since Harry Graham founded the original ranch, making the facility one of Alberta's most historically significant cattle operations. Wisps of memory endure: The great stone fireplace, which was built at the time of Colonel Snyder's ownership and was the only thing to survive the fire that destroyed his lodge, was incorporated into the new ranch house, built in 1987; the ashes of John Morgan Senior, who owned the ranch for twenty-two years, are scattered on the top of Butcher Hill, which overlooks the ranch buildings and the river; several Indian graves are located close by, serving as a reminder of a past in the Alberta Foothills that included trade and friendship with the white settlers.

The Early Beginnings of a Hamlet

David McDougall

George McDougall was born in Kingston, Ontario, after his father, David McDougall, emigrated to Canada from Dundee, Scotland, and was in naval service on the Great Lakes in the war of 1812 – 1815. George spent his youth as a trapper but later was Captain of two ships, the *Indian Prince* and the *Sydenham*, on which he sailed the Great Lakes, trading with the Indians and working as a Methodist preacher. He married Elizabeth Chantler, the Quaker daughter of a Toronto grist-mill operator, originally from England. From this marriage, six children were born. The oldest was John, who would become a Methodist minister like his father and develop an enduring bond with Canada's First Nations people, an attachment that would eventually lead him to missionary work in Morley, NWT (now Alberta). The second child, born to George and Elizabeth in 1844, was David Nawash McDougall, whose name, through his early settlement in the area, would become synonymous with the growth and development of Sundre.

The McDougall family was living and working in Fort Edmonton when David, who worked for the Hudson's Bay Company, met Annie McKenzie, born in 1851, during a trip to

Winnipeg. They were married in July, 1871. Soon after his marriage, David left the employ of the HBC and became a free trader. Free trading was illegal at the time but because David's sister, Elizabeth, was married to the Hudson's Bay Company's chief factor, David's activities were conveniently overlooked.

In 1873, George McDougall and John were given permission from the Methodist Church to establish a mission amongst the Stoney Indians in an area just east of present day Banff. The mission would be named Morleyville, (later shortened to Morley), after Clergyman Dr. William Morley Pushon.

John had previously made the acquaintance of Chief Jacob Bears paw, a Stoney Indian with a reputation as a great warrior in his youth and a dedicated peacemaker in his years as chief. It was at the Chief's suggestion that the Morleyville Mission was established.

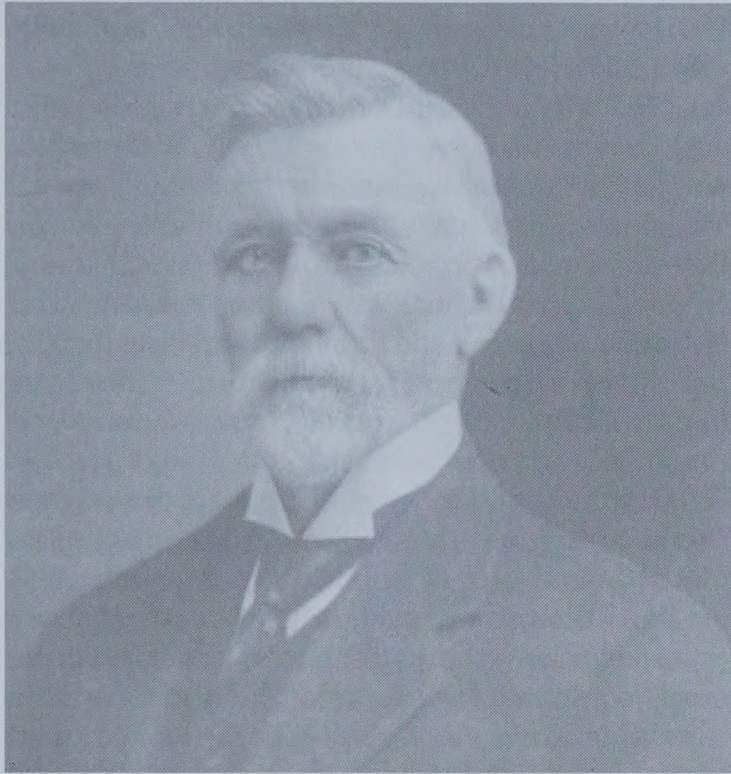
John and David and their wives moved to the Morley area in October 1873, by wagon train, taking cattle and horses and supplies with them. In the meantime, George and Elizabeth went east to raise money for the new mission.

The Indians at the Morley Reserve were very friendly and David, who spoke their language fluently, often accompanied them on trips into Banff and the Kananaskis. It was in Banff that David's Indian friends introduced him to the Middle Springs Cave and Basin. This natural hot spring would become an important tourist attraction as roads and railways opened the way for what would become Banff National Park (1887).

From 1887 – 1896 severe drought conditions caused increasing difficulties for the early settlers of Southern and Central Alberta. Cattle were increasingly thirsty and frequently broke through fences to reach any source of water. Brush fires were a constant threat to farmlands and homes; growing conditions were poor. The McDougalls were among those who suffered through these years of extreme dryness and David, who had been encouraged by his Indian friends to explore the countryside to the north of the Morley Reserve, made a decision to move to somewhat greener pastures – to establish a homestead on land where the town of Sundre now sits.

In 1893, at the age of forty-nine, David Nawash McDougall set up camp and squatted on the flatlands that are now known as McDougal Flats, (an "L" was lost in the registering of the name).

One hundred and six years later the McDougal Chapel, and the McDougal Community Hall, which was formerly the McDougal School, serve to remind us of the contributions David McDougall made to our town's history and, by default, to its future.



David McDougall Circa 1900. *Photo courtesy of
The Eleanor Luxton Historical Foundation*

While he took transitory lodgings on the flats, David staked a claim on land on the west side of the Red Deer River (formerly known as the Hind or Wabish River) at a point where a small, and at that time, seasonal, creek flowed into it. The Bearberry Creek entered the river at a slightly different point in the 1890's than it does now. It was re-channelled in the 1940's to increase its flow and to clear marshy areas. The property, surveyed as section 4-township33-range 5, had excellent grazing land and water for the cattle and offered the most suitable river crossing in the area. David built a log house close to the confluence of the river and the creek. It was a long building with a sod roof and was located in what is now 2nd Street NE.

Over the years he spent in Sundre, David McDougall would acquire eight thousand acres of land, stretching west towards the mountains and north to the Clearwater River. Records show that he obtained much of this land as a settler, but according to some sources, additional parcels ranging along the banks of the Red Deer River,

from Coal Camp to three miles north, were given to him by the Government, in appreciation for his ongoing work and friendship with the Stoney Indians.

One of the first people to work for Mr. McDougall in the Sundre area was J.W. (Jack) Smith, who came to the area as a lad of eighteen. Jack was the father of one of Sundre's oldest present residents, ninety-three year old Millie Haynes. Millie remembers her dad telling her of the long cattle drives he took part in between the McDougall ranch in Sundre and the ranch at Morley.

As his land and cattle herd expanded, David relied on the help of many of the settlers who moved into the area, some of whom would ride his range and help gather the cattle, while others harvested and put up the wild hay he used as winter feed. In this respect, he was one of Sundre's first employers and more than a few families in the surrounding community benefited from the arrangement. It was the early beginnings of a local economy – labour was exchanged for cash and goods and in turn the cash was exchanged for more goods and services. The demand for commercial enterprise and specialized services began to grow, if tentatively, as more individuals and families moved onto the vast tracts of virgin land that lay to the east and north of the banks of the Big Red.

Although McDougall can certainly be considered a founding father of Sundre, it is ironic that his presence here also served as a strong deterrent to Sundre's growth. He owned such vast tracts of land throughout the district that new settlement here was impossible. McDougall was a farmer, not a developer. He accumulated land for his ranching operations, but he was not interested in selling any of it. Consequently, settlers who might have considered this a prime area for homesteading were forced to look to the north, or to the east side of the river, for available land. The result of this was that at the turn of the twentieth century the first settlement in the area to show signs of having an economic future was Derbytown, located about six miles north of the present Sundre town site. The growth in the Derbytown district would persist for as long as McDougall continued to accumulate holdings to the south. This initial hold up in Sundre's growth would prove to be one of many challenges the community would face in the coming decades.



Annie McDougall Circa 1900. *Photo courtesy of the Eleanor Luxton Historical Foundation*

The pioneering life was never easy, but it probably wasn't always a day-to-day struggle for Sundre's first settlers. Grass and water were abundant and, most of the time, livestock flourished. An occasional attack on cattle by grizzly bears and other predators was always reason for excitement and concern, but overall, Sundre's first major land owner prospered, selling approximately five hundred head of steers in the fall of each year. The trading post he ran from his home did well and business was brisk with the Indians and other transients who passed through the area. David's two daughters, Georgina Elizabeth, born 1870, and Jane Ellen, born 1874, sometimes helped operate the trading post. Georgina, who was affectionately known as Georgie, is said to be the first non-native person born in Alberta. She spoke the Stoney language fluently, and had life-long friends among the Stoney people. She was taken into the tribe as

a Princess and Blood Sister in 1934, and given the name "Rainbow Woman" because she was seen to bring peace after a storm. In 1904, Georgie married Norman Luxton and moved to Banff, where the couple became instrumental in much of the development of that international tourist town. Her strong bond with the Native People in the area would continue until her death in 1965, at the age of ninety-five.

McDougall's son, David junior, born in 1880 and known locally as "young Dave", was very involved in the management of his father's ranch. The elder McDougall's wife, Annie, did not live on the ranch, choosing instead to remain at Morley, where David maintained strong business and family connections, but she did visit from time to time. David had additional assistance in Sundre from his long-time ranch foreman, whose name was possibly Jack Potts.

Despite the good years, there were times when David and other area settlers experienced great hardship and loss. Then, as now, there were outbreaks of disease amongst the livestock; feed shortages occurred when summers were so wet the crops could not be harvested, or the harvested stooks became so saturated with rain they turned black in the fields. There were also summers of virtually no rain at all, when crops withered before they could reach maturity and natural pasture became stunted and severely lacking in nutrition. There were frequent floods and forest fires and extreme winter conditions. The terrible winter of 1906-07 was one that would devastate many of the hardy souls who had staked their future on their West Country holdings. It was a winter of howling blizzards competing with intermittent Chinooks that then melted the deep snow. The Chinooks were followed by periods of intense and unrelenting cold, and the combination of extreme weather patterns eventually left the land totally ice-bound. One of the worst winters ever in the history of Alberta, it resulted in a severe lack of winter grazing for all animals, domestic and wild, and in great losses of cattle and horses for area ranchers. It was impossible to get feed to the livestock due to the conditions and it was impossible for the livestock to paw through the ice to reach the dried grasses they normally would have grazed on.

Slowly dying of thirst and starvation, while the frigid temperatures penetrated their pathetically thin bodies, great herds of cattle broke through fences in search of water and food. A few

were lucky enough to find it, but most were not. Many, already weakened by hunger and thirst, lost their footing on the ice and fell, breaking legs and eventually dying where they lay. In Central and Southern Alberta, thousands of head of cattle perished, along with their unborn calves.

The following poem came into my possession when Marcia Humphreys, a friend in Oregon, sent me a book of her mother's poetry as a gift. "Rainbows at Dusk" was published in 1993 when its author, Ruth Welch, was seventy-three years old. Marcia sent a note with the book suggesting I turn to page 46, where, coincidentally, there was a poem about Alberta. As it turns out, the poem is linked to the Sundre story, in that it tells of the winter of 1906-07. As a young man, Marcia's grandfather, Jon Gysbers, and his new wife, lived in Alberta for several years before returning to the USA. They did not experience the dreadful winter in question, but the dramatic event was recent enough that it was still frequently discussed with awe and a lingering sense of disbelief amongst Alberta settlers. Jon heard many tales of personal loss resulting from that tragic winter, and they became deeply imprinted in his own memory. In later years, he would recall these stories and share them with his own family. His daughter, Ruth, touched by the widespread effects of the disastrous events, would go on to write about them:

When the Cattle Died

Alberta, Canada

*It came so unexpectedly –
two feet of snow
Where cattle all year round were want
To come and go
At will across the prairie
Foraging
Fattening...*

*Two feet of snow and then the Chinook
That melts as it blows,
And then...such bitter cold
The wet snow froze.*

*Cattle suddenly marooned
in an ice-sheathed land
And not a single way for men to lift a hand;
No hay, nor any winter feed
In storage for this first-time need;
The ice impassable to man or horse.*

*And day and night the cattle sounds
of slow starvation
Assailing ears like Hell's
own condemnation*

*The winter of remorse, when strong men cried.
The year five thousand helpless cattle died.*

-Ruth Welch

In 1906, David McDougall may have had a premonition about what was to come, or perhaps, at sixty-two years old, he had just decided it was time to move on. Before the terrible winter unleashed its fury, an Englishman who called himself Lord Roberts, offered the McDougalls a great deal of money for the Sundre area holdings. The family accepted the offer, but later learned that "Lord Roberts", along with his promised cheque, had disappeared. Consequently, David stayed on in Sundre and was among those who suffered great losses in his cattle herd, in fact, some say that he lost nearly three quarters of his stock.

In 1907, with the fateful winter eventually over, David McDougall sold all his holdings to Nils Tilford Hagen, a Norwegian immigrant, who had for a time settled in North Dakota, USA. The Sundre adventure was over for the man who pursued and realized a dream on the banks of the Red Deer River. Perhaps he left, as he had come, in search of greener pastures. Whatever the reasons, he returned to the Morley Mission, where he continued ranching and trading until his death in 1926, at the age of eighty-one. There are stories that have endured the passage of time that tell how, for many years after David McDougall left Sundre, stray cattle, carrying the McDougall brand "O" on the left hip, were still to be found in the area.

David McDougall's home and his cattle shelters endured beside the river, maintained by the new owner, until age and local development reduced the buildings to nothing more than memory and a few scattered logs. But the McDougall name would live on to grace a chapel, a school (now a community hall) and a district – a fitting tribute to the squatter of 1893 who, in a little over a decade, accumulated more than eight thousand acres of land along the banks of the Big Red. Nils T. Hagen, Sundre's official founding father, would be remembered for his efforts in the early development of the community, but it was David McDougall who first recognised the poten-

tial of the area and who paved the way for all that was to follow.



Georgina McDougall-Luxton. Photo courtesy of
The Eleanor Luxton Historical Foundation



The McDougall Memorial Church at Morley
2007

A Good Campfire Story

Grizzly Bear on the Rampage

Because it is mentioned so often in area history books, the legend of Sundre's famous marauding Grizzly bear must have its rightful place in this book also. Do keep in mind, though, that bear stories, and the legendary bears around which the stories revolve, have a habit of becoming bigger than they actually were. Consequently, I take no responsibility for the accuracy of this tale!

Apparently, a giant sized Grizzly first made its appearance in the area in the mid to late 1880's. It had a large range and wreaked its havoc from a few miles north of the present town of Sundre, through the vast McDougall holdings, and then west to the ranch owned by Harry Graham (now Red Deer River Ranches). The bear had already killed eighteen head of cattle on the Graham ranch when it started to attack McDougall cattle and also the stock of Niddrie's and Coleman's at Derbytoun.

David McDougall's son, known locally as "young Dave", was out riding his horse one day, checking cattle along the banks of the Bearberry Creek, when he rounded a bend and suddenly came across the bear. The animal raised itself on its hind legs and roared at the intruder, who, not having a gun with him, quickly turned his horse and raced back the way he had come. It is said that the roar of that bear was heard for miles around! On reaching the McDougall ranch, young Dave reported what he had seen and heard. His father had already contacted some Indians hunters from Morley to dispatch of the rogue bear. Among them was a man known as "The Moose Hunter", a huge bear of a man himself, who, it is said, found he could stand with both feet in a single paw track of the grizzly and barely fill it. The Moose Hunter, renowned for his bravery and skill, was evidently not prepared to take a chance on his life with this particular *Ursus horribilis*, and reported that he had to make an urgent trip back to Morley, where his wife, he said, was very sick. He did, however, offer some advice to those who sought to kill the bear: He emphatically stressed that the hunters must kill it with the first shot or it would kill them first.

The remainder of the hunting party was willing to go after the bear. McDougall offered them a two hundred dollar reward for killing of the ani-

mal – believed to be an old boar, driven from his previous territory by younger males. However, the hunters refused to hunt the bear in thick cover, believing it could circle around them and suddenly attack from the rear. They knew from the size of its tracks that its paws were massive and could crack a man's skull with one swipe. Instead, they would pursue it in open countryside.

By this time, the bear had been killing cattle in the area for three years. Among its victims had been a bull which weighed 1,800 pounds, and which, by all accounts, had put up a huge fight and, despite being dehorned, had very possibly caused grievous injury to its attacker. This was surmised from an examination of the area where the bull was killed. The warring animals had ravaged the hillside, shredding large areas of turf and tearing trees up by their roots. To those who witnessed the scene, it was testimony to the scope of the battle between these two powerful warriors. The bear did not feed on the remains of the bull and perhaps this reinforces the possibility of the great bear being injured – or maybe it establishes that the bear truly was a rogue animal.

It was an accident of fate that eventually resulted in the death of the Grizzly. Sadly, the old warrior did not die loudly and ferociously, as would have been fitting to his reputation. Instead, he died in his sleep with a single bullet to his brain.

Two Indians came across his winter den on the slopes of Blue Hill and, on closer examination, found the great bear asleep, his massive head barely inside the entrance of the den. One of hunters simply placed the muzzle of his rifle in the bear's ear and fired – a very anti-climactic conclusion to an exciting story.

Outcasts From England

The Remittance Men

At the approach of the twentieth century, the British Aristocracy was flourishing and these wealthy landowners still considered themselves a breed apart from the general population. Their sons were educated at the best schools and colleges and their daughters learned the finer arts of deportment and decorum at various institutions, known as Finishing Schools. The English gentry had little in common with the commoners who worked for them. Their children were extremely

privileged and often considered themselves superior and above reproach. Despite this, there *were* family problems which were similar to those experienced by the working classes: Young men became addicted to gambling, drank too much, fathered illegitimate children or were generally without discipline or purpose. This was the case with second sons in particular, for, under British law at that time, only first sons could inherit the family estate. This often resulted in a sense of aimlessness in subsequent male children and as they neared adulthood, some of them became an embarrassment to their parents. Most often, the solution to this was to banish the young man in question to the far reaches of the British Empire, where his escapades could not possibly cause a stir within the inner circles of the English elite. Often, the shamed parents were not aware of the extreme hardships to which they were subjecting their pampered, wayward sons, for advertising out of Canada was inclined to paint a very rosy picture of the conditions under which the average settler lived. Consequently, the young men were shipped off to Western Canada with little to prepare them for the gruelling future they faced in the New World, and all they had to keep from starving to death was the regular "remittance" from the family back home.

Some of the better off remittance men who came to Western Canada tended to build homes that were conspicuous in their grandeur, their elegant design contrasting sharply with the sod roofed cabins of their neighbours. Some of these men made little or no attempt to find work, but this was really not surprising considering most had been raised in homes where servants catered to their every need. In any case, the majority of them had no skills that were compatible with the hard graft required of the regular pioneers. A man with an extensive arts education at Oxford or Eton was often completely at sea with an axe in his hand and, though he might have superb polo playing skills, he knew nothing about breaking up virgin land with a team of oxen and a walking plough.

Because remittance men were often seen as lazy, self absorbed and arrogant - sometimes an accurate observation, but not always - they were often shunned by the hard working settlers. As double outcasts, first at the hands of their parents and then as a result of the actions of their pioneering neighbours, they tended to become eccentric and to shut themselves away from everyday life.

Some, however, rose above adversity and developed viable horse and cattle ranches. While these successful remittance men were not always totally accepted, they did gain respect and a degree of admiration in their communities and amongst the local people they hired to work for them.

Log Booms and Skidding Sloops

The Development of Sundre's Lumber Industry

With its strong Scandinavian heritage, it is not at all surprising that Sundre's earliest history bears a natural connection to the lumber industry. When the first settlers came to the areas west of Sundre, the hills and valleys and riverbanks had fewer stands of mature timber than they do now. Frequent spot fires in the fall ravaged the growing trees and much of the area seemed to be in a perpetual state of re-growth. A major fire in the area in the 1870's had burned for two years and destroyed large tracts of natural forest. Despite this, there were still lots of forested areas and at one time or another during Sundre's early years, a large number of settlers either ran a sawmill or worked for one.

The first recorded saw-log river drive took place in 1900, undertaken by a Mr. Drake, with half a million board feet of lumber travelling downstream from Coal Camp to Red Deer, but many other area names pop up from the distant past in relation to the early lumber industry: J.T. and O.T. Johanneson, Charles Schmidt, Tom Smith and Simon Nordhus among them. Nils T. Hagen, Sundre's founder, also owned a sawmill, which operated first from his timber berth #1586, in 1913, and then from Sundre in 1916. It appears that Mr. Hagen was not active in the day-to-day operation of his mill, but it can certainly be assumed that his financial investment and his business savvy played a large part in its success.

The Great West Lumber Company, with its main mill based in the Bower Ponds area of Red Deer, was to become the area's largest commercial lumber operation in the early years and much of its raw material would be harvested from the banks of the Red Deer River, west of Sundre. The company was founded by several shareholders, among them, Captain J.W. Robinson of Winnipeg,

President, and W. (Bill) McKenzie, who was in charge of bush camps and log drives. It appears the company began operation in 1905, but records show its official formation as February 10, 1906. Great West bought out commercial timber rights in the Sundre area, which at that time were owned by Robinson McKenzie Lumber Co. Ltd. and Atlas Lumber Co., and the company began hiring men and setting up camps.

The main camp was located S.W. of Sundre at Coal Camp, so named because of the seam of coal that could be seen in the river bank at this location. Other camps were scattered through the area. The camps were cramped and primitive, with the employees, ranging in numbers from two hundred to six hundred men, sleeping two to a berth and having to contend with lice and bedbugs at night and long hours of hard labour during the day. Even so, the area's settlers, many of whom were extremely poor, were grateful for the opportunity to earn extra money to support their farms and families.

Most of the timber cutting operations took place in the wintertime and this worked well for the settlers because during the warmer months they were kept busy developing their homesteads.

As the logs were harvested, they were transported to the nearest camp and piled up on the ice at the edge of the river. When spring came around and the ice melted, they were rolled into the water and sent downstream to Red Deer for processing. During a log drive, the Red Deer River, unpredictable at the best of times, became a very dangerous place for those needing to cross it: Horses could be swept off their feet by the logs and the wagons upset, the contents, inanimate and human, spewing into icy waters. Settlers making the hazardous crossings used "pike poles" to manipulate the logs and keep a path open for the horses and wagons. It required considerable skill and attention to make it safely to the opposite bank. All the official ferry crossings from Sundre to Red Deer had to be dismantled during a log drive, causing considerable inconvenience and danger for area farmers.

A "River Pig" was the logging term for a man who worked the log booms. He had to be very agile because there was an ever-present risk of losing his footing on the slippery logs and falling into the water, possibly to be crushed between rolling logs or drowned beneath them.

The average salary for a month's work as an

employee of Great West was twenty-six dollars. Board and lodging was thrown in and was commonly referred to as "beans". The men endured great hardships in the frigid winter conditions and many risked life and limb on a daily basis. There were few safety regulations in effect at the time and medical assistance was at least a day's drive away by horse and wagon.



Great West Lumber Crew on Red Deer River Drive. *Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum*

The straw bosses and walking bosses were not always good-natured souls, and some of them pushed their men relentlessly and often dangerously in the interest of higher production and profits. Despite it all, the area settlers and the many transients who found work with the

company probably didn't complain too much. Employment wise, there was not much else available at that time. Besides, these were pioneers - men of tough stock - who were accustomed to the backbreaking labour required in carving a life out of the wilderness and accepting of the associated perils presented by Mother Nature.

The Great West Lumber Company changed hands several times during its official ten-year history in the Sundre area and it underwent considerable expansion. Annual yield varied, depending on weather conditions and the effects of the frequent floods that went through the area in the early part of the twentieth century. At the height of its productivity, the company had as many as seventy-five teams of horses. Many of them were used to pull the "Sloops", sleigh-like affairs used for moving the logs out of the bush. An additional thirty horses per camp were used for skidding the logs to the riverbanks. The livestock alone created a considerable amount of local employment: Men were in constant demand for breaking and training the teams, for shoeing and for supplying and hauling feed to them.

In 1913, a very bad accident at the mill in Red Deer not only took the life of the company's top sawyer, Ole M. Ness, but, through a chain of related events, also caused considerable damage to the mill. As a result, the mill was forced to run



Martin Mjolsness & his Portable Sawing Outfit in 1908. *Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum*

on a reduced schedule for almost a year while repairs were made, and it incurred considerable losses. But by June 1914, it was up and running again and fully anticipated a doubling of its highest previous production. This might well have come about had nature not taken a hand in things and dealt the company what would prove to be a fatal blow.

The winter of 1914-1915 brought exceedingly heavy snowfall to the mountains at the headwaters of the Red Deer River. By late June of 1915, very warm weather had melted the snow pack and by July 1st it came rushing down through the mountains, filling every gully and stream bed, overflowing every creek and surging into the Red Deer River basin with a force that only nature can produce. This great deluge of water that swept away everything in its path and would be known forever after as the Great Flood of 1915. Not only did it devastate The Great West Lumber Company, but also radically altered the history of Sundre.

Great booms of lumber broke loose from the banks at the various camps and went careening crazily down the swollen river. Heavy steam powered machinery, some weighing up to forty tones, was first battered by an onslaught of logs and then rolled into the current, some of it to be buried under a deep layer of silt and gravel and never recovered. Dams burst along the smaller rivers and streams, forcing even more water into the engorged Red Deer River. Many of the horses that had worked so tirelessly for the company drowned before anyone had time to rescue them all. Tossed around like matchsticks, thousands of logs rolled and rollicked on their journey towards the tiny hamlet of Sundre, uprooting trees from the banks and gathering in momentum with every twist and turn of the river. Much further downstream, at Red Deer, The Great West Lumber Company was scrambling desperately to save the mill from the early onslaught of water that was already causing serious damage to the dam on the millpond. It was all to no avail. Already cresting at almost twenty feet above normal, the Red Deer River had become a furious and unstoppable monster, devouring everything in its path.

By Monday, July 4, the Sundre Bridge, built only six years earlier, was no more. The Derbytown Bridge, built at approximately the same time, was also destroyed. Perhaps these two bridges might have survived had it not been for the massive force pressed against the pilings by the accumulation of

hundreds of trapped logs and associated wreckage, but given the seriousness of the flood, it seems unlikely. Downstream, Red Deer was hit hard too, and one of the major casualties was the Great West Lumber Mill.

Some of the logs released from west of Sundre that fateful weekend eventually found their way into the South Saskatchewan River and handily washed up along the banks. A resourceful individual in Lancer, Saskatchewan –which is situated approximately four hundred and fifty miles from the origin of the logs, salvaged some of the lumber and, in the fall of that year, he built himself a cosy log cabin, which is possibly still standing.

The Great West Lumber Company, employer of up to six hundred men at its peak production level, conceded defeat and operated only in salvage mode. The logs that had escaped the flood were floated down the river to Red Deer. The bunkhouses were pulled out of the camps and what was left of the machinery was dismantled and removed. Once the salvage was complete, the company sold out to Rat Portage Lumber Company, who continued to operate under the Great West name for some time.

If this flood had not occurred - if the Derbytown and Sundre Bridges had not been destroyed - it is very possible that Sundre would never have grown to be a town and that Derbytown would have developed further as the nucleus of the local trading area. Following the destruction of these two key structures, a decision was made by the government to replace only one bridge – the one at Sundre. It was a sturdy iron span structure and it weathered several more floods before being replaced with the present bridge in 1959. With the loss of its bridge, Derbytown gradually went into decline and the creamery there, which was another victim of the widespread flooding, was sold and relocated to Sundre, creating further incentive for the development of the hamlet named by N.T. Hagen.

For ten years, the Great West Lumber Company had provided much needed employment and income for many of the Sundre area's first families. Its demise was a great loss to the area, but it most certainly was not the end of the local lumber industry. Over the following years, many individuals harvested timber and/or processed it into lumber, which was sold both locally and internationally.

Chester and Lloyd Mjolsness, the sons of Sundre area pioneers Louis and Minnie Mjolsness, started a small sawmill in October 1946, although Chester was active in the industry for several years prior to that. Their father had run a sawmill, originally owned and operated by J.T. Johanneson, for several years before it was destroyed by fire in 1918, so in many ways, it was natural that the two sons would choose a similar way to make a living. Many other Mjolsness relatives had also been connected with the lumber industry in the area at one time or another. The brothers called their company Mjolsness Brothers, and Jim Haug, a well-known Bergen area resident, became their sawyer in 1950 and remained in that position for many years.

Chester and Lloyd proved themselves to be shrewd businessmen and as their business grew, they expanded the boundaries of the operation well beyond the Sundre area. For many years, they harvested timber at Williams Creek, thirty miles west of Sundre, in partnership with Eskesen Brothers, the company owned by Art and Niels Eskesen. Then in the summer of 1952, the company began working in the Spray Lakes area, near Banff. Today, the Spray Lakes Sawmill, now owned by Chester's son, Barry, employs more than one hundred and fifty people and has won several prestigious business and environmental awards.



An Early Lumber Worker. *Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum*

In 1945, a year before Mjolsness Brothers started official operation; Jack Morgan, John Macleod and Nate Ellithorpe founded Sundre Contracting, which initially was focussed on the

lumber trade, exporting timber products to the USA. In 1947, after the export business proved unreliable, they branched out and formed Sundre Lumber Company, which operated from a site on the Bergen Road. Mjolsness Brothers, along with several other local companies, milled timber under contract to Sundre Lumber for several years.

Sundre Contracting eventually changed its focus to gravel, and it is a credit to its founders and to the Harder family, who have owned it since the 1970's, that it is one of Sundre's oldest and most successful businesses.

The 50's brought great changes to the lumber industry in the Sundre area. For half a century, small family owned mills had managed to supplement their farm incomes by harvesting and selling logs and building materials alongside the bigger operators. There had never been a shortage of labour in this industry because other farmers and ranchers were always willing to work in the winter months, when farm chores were reduced and money was short. The discovery of large deposits of oil in the area in 1954, while a great boon for the Sundre community in general, was the sounding of the death knoll for many of the companies that had made a living from the area's forests for so many years. Oil companies paid high wages and the local logging contractors and sawmill operators could not compete. Also, by the 1960s, much stricter lumber grading rules and safety measures were in place and a quota system had been introduced. These new practices had an additional impact on the viability of small lumber outfits still in operation. It was the end of one era and the beginning of another for the people of Sundre and area. A way of life would be forever changed by the advent of Sundre's oil and gas boom, but a brand new future opened up for the community and for the descendants of those early lumber pioneers.

The Morgan/Ellithorpe/Macleod partnership was dissolved in the 1950's and Sundre Lumber Company was sold to Revelstoke Lumber, who greatly improved the efficiency of the mill by replacing diesel-powered machinery with electrical power. The company also operated a very successful home improvement store from this location. In the 1970's, a fire, which originated in the electrical system, destroyed most of the machinery in the plant and this had to be replaced. By this time, the mill had more than forty employees and was producing around the clock.



Fred Rattry, Ted Green, Art Eskesen and Allan Clark in the late 1940s.

Photo courtesy of Sundre Museum archives & Gary Vooy's



The Old Revelstoke Burner in 2007 Viewed from the West Side of the Red Deer River

In 1987, Revelstoke sold the mill. New owners Ross Creelman and Bruce Buchanan had big plans and very soon after taking over the old site, the pair embarked on an ambitious venture that would see the building of a new, high tech mill west of Sundre, which would provide work for many people. The old Revelstoke yard was still used for a while by a company known

as TKM. It operated as a producer of specialized lumber products, under the management of Tom and Linus Clark.

Creelman and Buchanan called their new company "Sunpine Forest Products" and it was destined to become one of the most diversified and successful mills in Canada.

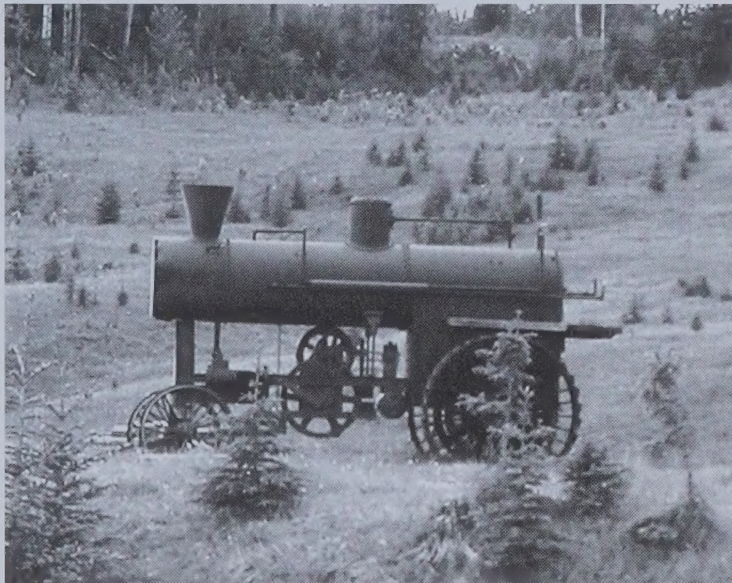
River Gives up Relic from the Past

Nearly a hundred years ago, when the Great Flood of 1915 changed the course of Sundre's history, an Avery Wood Fired Traction Boiler was swept into the raging river from the Great West Lumber Company Camp at Coal Camp, where it sank below the surface of the water into the mud. As the flood subsided and the heavy silt began to settle over wide areas, the massive engine was buried.

Keith Schneidmiller has a fascination for old steam engines and tractors and a passion for discovering the old machines and rebuilding them. He probably couldn't believe his luck when several years ago one of these treasures literally "appeared on his doorstep".

Keith and his wife, Cheryl, were feeding cattle

on the lower half of the Red Deer River Ranches, north of Rock Cut on the Coal Camp Road. The river was low at that time of year, and as Cheryl glanced along its course, she saw something protruding from the streambed, about a half-mile from where the couple stood. On checking things out, Keith and Cheryl discovered an old steam engine, firmly embedded into the rocks, gravel and mud of the river. Keith brought in a D8 Cat and was able to pull the engine out and drag it home. It was the old Avery Boiler. Keith refurbished the huge old machine and it is now on display on the Schneidmiller property, near Coal Camp. This engine, manufactured in Peoria, Illinois, was a very modern one in its time. Today, sitting atop a small rise in the landscape, it offers a symbolic salute to Sundre's past and to its lumber industry, still such an important contributor to the community's economy today, and to the pioneers who, despite the hardships and the heartbreaks, never lost sight of their dreams or their unified belief in the area's future.



The Old Avery Boiler Located on the Schneidmiller Property

Iowa Native Started Out with Mail Haul

Ralph Ellithorpe and Sundre Transport

Ralph Ellithorpe, born in 1891, was the son of Nathan Smith Ellithorpe, a resident of Iowa, USA, who came to Alberta in 1903. Ralph, who stayed in Iowa to attend school, joined his father at his Westward Ho

Homestead in 1905.

In 1914 Ralph married Alice Fowler, born March 28, 1898, who emigrated to Canada from England with her parents in 1912. She was sixteen years old at the time of her marriage to Ralph. For a short while, the newlyweds lived on Ralph's land at McDougal Flats but then moved to the N.S. Ellithorpe homestead at Westward Ho where they raised cattle and sheep for the next twelve years. Their Westward Ho home was used as a polling station for many of the elections in the early years.

In 1926, the Ellithorpe family moved to the Olds area, where they remained for a year and where Ralph had a mail hauling business, which included the Sundre route and eventually evolved into a general freight business. In 1927, the Ellithorpe family packed up their belongings again and moved west, where they purchased a quarter section of land on the eastern banks of the Red Deer River, just across the Sundre Bridge. At that time, this property lay outside the present town limits. From this location, Ralph continued to run his trucking business, Sundre Transport. He hauled freight from Calgary once a week in all kinds of weather and road conditions. Only part of the road between Sundre and Olds was gravelled, the rest being dirt, and when conditions were poor, the round trip between Sundre and Calgary often took several days.

The Ellithorpe family also operated a store, the Sundre General Store, which was built by Ralph's father and later became Knott's Trading Post. There were five Ellithorpe children by that time and they all attended Sundre East School. Rose (Vennard) Ellithorpe remembers the five children clamouring onto the backs of two horses in the summer for their trip to school. In winter, May (Pearce) Ellithorpe would drive the sleigh and team with her siblings on board. At that time, Miss Allie Smith was the teacher, and Rose often stayed with this lady at the teacherage.

Ralph and Alice were eventually the parents of nine children: Nathan (Bessie Heaton); May (Ernie Pearce); Alice (Jack Thomas); Margaret (Bill Thompson); Rose (Everett Vennard), who still lives in Sundre and who, with her husband ran Vennard's Store from 1947 until 1970; Grace (Steve Hysel); Ernest (Joan Bear); Jean (Earl Lindsey), who resides in Sundre, and youngest child, Robert, a well-known Sundre resident through his many years in business as R&V Excavating, is married to the former Viola Lazzarotto.

When Ralph decided to sub-divide his quarter, he asked that the land be annexed into the Sundre hamlet. He donated some of the land for the construction of the first Sundre Legion Hall and, over time, several homes and businesses were located in the area on his former property.



Some of the Ellithorpe children are included in this photo of Mrs. Heaton's Sunday School Class. Back row L to R: Bessie Heaton, May, Alice & Margaret Ellithorpe, Mrs. Heaton, Andrew Machan.

2nd row: Grace & Rose Ellithorpe, Francis Sheets, Ernest Ellithorpe, Myrtle and Mervin Sheets.

Front row: Phyllis Davidson & Jack Machan.

Photo courtesy of Phyllis Burke



Ellithorpe's Mail Truck Parked Outside the Hagen Store. *Photo courtesy of Phyllis Burke*

Ralph ran Sundre Transport, which was expanded to include the hauling of various kinds of freight, until 1939, when he sold out to his son-in-law, Ernie Pearce. Ernie continued the tradition of hauling freight, which included several trips into Calgary each week, and ran the business until 1952, when he sold it to John Phillips.

Because Sundre had no rail line, the oil boom in the mid 50s created a great deal of business for Sundre Transport. Starting with just one truck, it wasn't long before John acquired two more. The drivers hauled a wide variety of freight day and night.

In 1963, John and his wife, Anna Mae, decided to move to the Enderby area in BC, where they had purchased a dairy farm. They sold the business to Raymond Phillips. John Phillips passed away some time ago, but Annie Mae continues to live on the North Okanagan farm.

Raymond Phillips, who now lives with his wife Delores in Spruce Grove, continued to operate Sundre Transport until he eventually sold out to Murray Phillips and Don Sturrock. In the years since then, the business has closed its doors.

Ralph Ellithorpe passed away on December 26, 1973, and Alice, who after her husband's death lived in a log cabin on the east boundary of the Sundre Mobile Home Park, died on April 8, 1977.



Ralph Ellithorpe's Mail Truck.
Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum



Ralph Ellithorpe and Sundre Transport.
Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum



The Sundre General Store Originally Built and Operated by the Ellithorpe Family. In Later Years this Store Became Knott's Trading Post. Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum

Dan Fry's Invitation to Dinner

In an interview with Anne Banta in 1964, Mr. Ralph Ellithorpe remembers that in Sundre's early history - several years before N.T. Hagen officially named the community - there were those who did not welcome the arrival of new settlers into the area.

A notorious character, by the name of Dan Fry, was one of the old-time Sundre area cowboys who wanted to keep the settlers out and he apparently had a rather unique way of discouraging them from putting down roots.

Whenever a prospective settler ventured into the West Country to look over the land opportunities, at some point in the trip he would come across Dan Fry. Dan would start up a conversation, asking politely what the settler was doing, where he was heading etc., and then, in a

neighbourly manner, he would invite his "victim" back to his place for dinner. There likely were many hapless newcomers to the area who were impressed by the man's friendly offer of hospitality. Unfortunately for them, Dan Fry was following a well-practiced script and had no intention of sitting down to a meal with any of them. Immediately after having made his considerate gesture, the cowboy would wheel his horse around, toss his hat in the air, and with a loud "whoopie" would draw his six-gun, put two shots through his hat, then catch it and slap it back on his head. With another loud shout he would gallop away, leaving his "prey" wide-eyed and open mouthed and absolutely *convinced* that they did not want a man like Dan Fry for a neighbour! Unaware that they had been hoodwinked, the settlers would then set their sights on "more civilized" properties to the east.

The Era of the One Room School House

Early Sundre Area Schools

In the Sundre area, you would have to have been born before the middle of the 1950's to remember much about the one-room schoolhouse. You would have had to be born even earlier to recollect what it was like to walk or ride a horse to school in all kinds of inclement weather and conditions. For many of the settler children, the treks to and from school covered distances of several miles each way. For the poorer families, and they were the majority, shoes and boots were often hand-me-downs - sometimes too tight - sometimes so big the toes had to be stuffed with newspaper. Then, as now, mitts and toques became lost or misplaced; an accidental dip while exploring a half frozen creek on the way home from school might result in a life-threatening situation. And yet, those who remember those times, for the most part, share the happiest of memories.

Progress and the passage of time erase much of what was valued in the past: Buildings decay or are demolished; recollections fade or are transformed as they pass from grandfather to son to daughter. The new replaces the old and soon it is hard to picture exactly how things used to look or be. It becomes more difficult for us, the present generation, to imagine a time when life was hard on a daily basis, and often heartbreakingly so, and yet people were basically happy. Despite the hard physical labour they often endured, our pioneering ancestors, poor and struggling as they might have been, enjoyed a lifestyle that is hard to match today, regardless of our many luxuries and conveniences. There was a wonderful sense of challenge to the Old West and perhaps it was the call of that challenge that drew to this area the hardest, most persistent souls, who raised hardy, persistent children - well able to endure the comparative inconvenience of the early one-room schoolhouses.

Some Early Sundre Area Schools

1905 - Eagle Valley School

The Eagle Valley School is said to be the first schoolhouse to be built west of the Little Red.

1908 - Bergen School

1910 - Rockwood School

1910 - McDougal Flats School

1912 - Lobley School

1916 - Bearberry School

1921 - James River School

1921 - Sunberry School

1929 - Eagle Point School

The Eagle Point School, located approximately three miles north of Sundre, was built at a cost of fifteen hundred dollars in 1929 to accommodate a growing number of local area children. A contracting company known as Morrisons was hired for the work. Several of the local youngsters were already attending the Rockwood School, but for some of them it was a long journey there and back each day. There were many younger children who would soon reach school age, as several Eagle Point families, including the Albert Sheets, Stan Deans, Walter Mennears, Howard Birds and Marshall Greens, all had fair sized families. The settlement worked together for two years to develop the Eagle Point School District and to build the schoolhouse. At that time the hamlet of Sundre had only a few school age children, among them Bessie Heaton and Eddie Jeannot - both of whom would attend school at Eagle Point once construction was completed.

Lillian McGonigal was a student janitor at the Eagle Point School in 1931 and she has vivid memories of the lonely trek to the school, leaving home much earlier than the other students, in order to clean and light the big old pot bellied stove. Walking the mile and a half in all weathers, she had to carry a 25 lb. Rogers Golden Syrup pail, filled with the day's supply of water for the students and teacher. After school, when everyone but the teacher had left, Lillian would sweep the floors and split kindling, leaving everything prepared for the start of her chores the following morning.

The Eagle Point School closed its doors in 1942, apparently due to a dwindling student population, and a short time later it was moved into Sundre, where it became the community's first school. Its Sundre location eventually housed the E.W. Miller School and is the site of the present school complex.



McDougal School in the Late 1930s.

Front row: ? Conchuck, Orville Gochee, Gladys Nielson, Doreen Coreless, Gerald Stevenson, Syd Vollmin.

2nd row: Norman Braunberger, Harold Gochee, Jack Machan, Leslie Bigelow, Phyllis Davidson, Bob Vollmin, Richard Bigalow, Arnold Braunberger, Roland Birney.

3rd row: Ernest Bigalow, Willard Braunberger, Sid Bigalow, Ruth Gochee, Janet Gochee, Fred Kraft, Chester Vollmin.

Back row: Dorothy Conchuck, Marion Mjolsness, Florence Mill, Gladys Braunberger.

Photo courtesy of Phyllis Burke



The Old Bergen School House is Now Part of the Pioneer Village Museum in Sundre

Teaching at the Turn of the Twentieth Century

Two Petticoats and No Socializing with Men

Education today is a lot more complex than it was a hundred years ago, when basic reading, writing and arithmetic were the order of the day, with a little singing, physical activity and religious instruction thrown in for balance. Biology was a bean in a jar, nurtured by a scrap of wet blotting paper; science was a simple Bunsen burner and a few basic ingredients that could be found in any kitchen. You learned trades and skills by helping your dad construct a corral or watching your mother knead dough for bread. A hundred years ago, kids generally didn't need sex education: they learned most of what they needed to know from helping out in the barn or walking through a field of cattle; by hearing the first cry of a new infant sibling, brought into the world by the local midwife.

In many ways, life was a lot less complicated than it is now. Most students did not go on to college – in fact many never had the opportunity to complete high school. More often than not, their labour was needed on the farm well before they turned eighteen.

By necessity, teachers today are required to complete several years of formal training before they set foot in a classroom, whereas, in the early years of our province, teachers were often barely more than children themselves, frequently rushed through the training system to meet the increasing demands for education throughout the burgeoning settlement areas. This all changed, though, with the dawning of the Great Depression, as drought drove settlers off their homesteads and school attendance dropped drastically, sometimes to the point where school districts were abandoned along with the empty schoolhouses. The resulting lack of demand meant that aspiring teachers had to search diligently to obtain employment.

Education may have been simpler in the early 1900s, and teaching may not have had the same kinds of pressures it has today, but choosing to teach could not have been a decision that was taken lightly, given the conditions at the time: A teaching position was very demanding and teachers often had difficulty collecting their pay. Poverty was the norm in the early frontier years and rural school trustees frequently had trouble rais-

ing the local taxes required to pay the teachers. During the 1930s and early 1940s, the minimum annual salary for an Alberta teacher was eight hundred and forty dollars and as the Depression took its toll on the economy, this fell even lower.

Rural teachers—mostly young, single women—were responsible for grades one through eight, sometimes even grades one through eleven, all in one room. This called for superior organizational skills and patience on the part of the teacher. These young people were often teaching students very close to themselves in age and it must have been a significant challenge to assert the authority that was required to keep the attention of the students.

Before taking charge of their country schoolhouses, many teachers had been accustomed to the comparably modern amenities of city life. It must have come as a shock, to those who accepted rural positions, to find themselves stranded in places where even the basic necessities of comfort were lacking.

"Physical conditions were harsh in the prairie schoolhouses in the 1930s. By modern standards, facilities were primitive. Drinking water often had to be carried to the school from a neighbouring farm. A potbellied stove provided heat in the winter. There was no indoor plumbing, and conveniences were located outside the schoolhouse. Barns sheltered the horses that served as transportation for most pupils, and books and other teaching resources were often inadequate or nonexistent. Further, teachers were often asked to perform janitorial work, such as tending the fire and cleaning the schoolhouse.

In those years, teachers often boarded with farmers, who received a tax credit for providing this service. Alternatively, the teacher might be housed in a teacherage, some of which resembled drafty granaries, or in the schoolhouse itself. The latter situation was the source of considerable disruption when the schoolhouse also served as a church, community hall and Saturday night dance hall. Despite such challenges, heroism and persistence were the fabric of everyday life for rural teachers, who made unique contributions to the quality of rural education."

There were very stringent rules that rural schoolteachers had to adhere to in Alberta's early history. Females, in particular, were expected to exhibit the utmost virtue both at work and also in their free time. Any rule breaking could, and usu-

ally did, result in instant and shameful dismissal. In 1915, the following rules for female teachers were published in Quote Magazine:

- "1. You will not marry during the term of your contract.
2. You are not to keep company with men.
3. You must be home between the hours of 8:00 P.M. and 6:00 A.M.
4. You may not loiter downtown in ice cream stores.
5. You may not ride in a carriage or automobile with any man unless he is your father or your brother.
6. You may not smoke cigarettes.
7. You may not dress in bright colours.
8. You may, under no circumstances, dye your hair.
9. You must wear at least two petticoats.
10. Your dresses must not be any shorter than two inches above the ankle.
11. To keep the schoolroom neat and clean, you must sweep the floor at least once daily; scrub the floor at least once a week with hot, soapy water; clean the blackboards at least once a day and start the fire at 7:00 A.M. so the room will be warm by 8:00 A.M."

As the years rolled by and teacher shortages occurred as a result of better paying employment opportunities during WW2, governments were forced to relax the rules governing the training, selection and conduct of teachers. Married women were finally allowed to teach, although many of the old school frowned upon this practice unless the woman in question was the sole bread winner in the family; restrictions on clothing and social activities were also loosened to reflect the changing times. Gradually, teachers were gaining a degree of bargaining power and the profession of teaching began to take on a new level of respect.

Getting from There to Here

Early Crossings and Bridges 1908 - Present

The majority of homesteaders who settled in the West Country arrived at Olds by train and traveled west to take up their land. They had only rutted trails to follow with their teams of horses, mules or oxen, their wagons loaded with supplies,

small livestock and sometimes children. The trails were difficult to follow, especially during the many wet years at the beginning of the century. The swollen creeks and rivers the settlers encountered were great obstacles at times, and drowning, either human or animal, was not uncommon. Even at best, the Dog Pound and Bearberry Creeks, the Little Red Deer River and the Red Deer River created many unexpected delays.

Prior to the dawning of the twentieth century, some of the land west of the Red Deer River had been surveyed and was being taken up by homesteaders. However, it wasn't until about 1900 that surveying commenced along the Red Deer River itself. Real estate agents, Dominion Land agents, and land locators were suddenly as busy as the new settlers themselves.

As the homesteaders traveled west from Olds, a main route developed, heading northwest toward the settlement of Derbytown. The scattered community six miles north of what is now Sundre, was accessed via the Niddrie-Fletcher crossing on the Red Deer River. In 1903, the Niddrie-Fletcher Crossing was the choice most settlers made. Others, however, chose to ford the river at the McDougall Crossing, which was situated in the general area of the present Sundre Bridge.

A steady trickle of settlers continued into the West Country and for several years the crossings, although often difficult to navigate, served their purpose reasonably well. The settlers found, however, that during spring and summer floods, they were cut off from medical aid, mail, groceries, and other supplies. These hardships became too much for some homesteaders and they moved away. Word spread of the difficulties people would encounter if they settled west of the Big Red. Consequently, when new arrivals inquired in Olds about available land, they often changed their plans about searching for it on the other side of this unpredictable river. This situation affected the business of local real estate agents and land locators, as well as having an impact on the overall development of the area, a prime concern for governments who were spending a great deal of effort on encouraging settlement. The need for a bridge became a prime concern.

One of the early mandates of the new Government of Alberta, formed on September 1, 1905, was to be responsible for building bridges. The government was soon inundated with applications from all areas of the province. On a local level, it

became essential to convince the Department of Public Works that a bridge for Red Deer River residents was urgently needed. Various petitions were launched and in April 1907, an Assistant Chief Engineer was sent to inspect the river at the Niddrie-Fletcher and McDougall crossings. After the inspection, one of the Department's officials assured the people that a bridge would be constructed at a site serving the settlers to their best advantage.

There were many discussions about the most appropriate place for the bridge. There were also many visits from engineers from the Department of Public Works in Edmonton. The biggest argument to have the bridge built at the McDougall crossing was that N.T. Hagen had bought the McDougall land and had already divided some of it into small parcels in order to attract growth in the community. Several individuals, perhaps associates of N.T., who had lived in the USA before heading to Alberta, had begun to purchase these parcels. As a result, the new settlement was in a state of modest growth and perhaps a good candidate for a bridge. However, Derbytown was the more established of the two hamlets at that time and its residents felt very strongly that the bridge should be built there.

In the end, two bridges were built. The first one completed was at the Niddrie-Fletcher crossing in 1908, at a cost of just over twenty-three thousand dollars. The bridge at the McDougall Crossing was completed in 1909. The two new bridges were a great blessing to all the communities who

used them. The hazardous crossings were now eliminated and the settlers were no longer isolated for weeks or months at a time by a river raging with floodwaters. Businesses sprang up and flourished at both Derbytown and Sundre.

In 1912, the June and July rains melted the snow in the mountains, sending extra volumes of wa-

ter down the rivers, washing out the gravel bars and moving the channels to new locations. Logs from local sawmills were driven downstream by



The Phil Seaman Outfit on East Approach of Sundre Bridge, 1908.

Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum

the floodwaters, causing additional strain against the bridge piers. One of the spans of the Niddrie-Fletcher Bridge, which by this time was known as the Rockwood Bridge, collapsed and seventy feet of the east approach, was destroyed. The Sundre Bridge was also damaged, though less severely than the one at Derbytown. Appropriate repairs were made to both.

In June of 1915, another flood hit the area, this one bringing an even greater amount of water surging down local waterways. The Red Deer River, its destructive power further increased by the hundreds of logs it had set loose at the Coal Camp lumber yard, roared wildly, destroying everything in its path - including the bridges at Sundre and Derbytown.

It was decided that only one bridge would be replaced. With a great deal of help from Duncan Marshall, much respected MP for the local area, a new steel span bridge would be built at Sundre.



Derbytown Bridge in flood in 1915

Photo - Sundre Museum

The steel was hauled from Olds by a gentleman from Eagle Valley and work on the structure continued through the winter of that year, with reports of temperatures hitting sixty below zero at times.

The bridge was completed and opened for traffic in March 1916. Although the Niddrie Bridge was patched up and put back into service after the 1915 flood, it was completely washed out again in 1917. The new Sundre Bridge, secure on its concrete footings, withstood the ravages of the Red Deer River for forty-two years. The long approaches on the east side were repaired and replaced at various times as flood waters tore them away between 1917 to 1959, and much bank protection work was done. In 1929, the bridge was painted and in 1930 the bridge deck was replaced. But as the community grew and traffic increased, the old single lane iron-span outlived its usefulness and a double lane



The 2nd Ironspan Bridge in 1959.

Photo courtesy of Mary Lund

concrete structure bridge was built to replace it in 1959.

For a while, the old and the new stood together - the one paying homage to the gutsy pioneering spirit of Sundre's past - the other, equally symbolic, heralding the bright hope of its future.

The concrete bridge, given a few face-lifts over the years, still stands today.



The Old & the New Side by Side in 1959.

Photo courtesy of Sundre Round Up Archives



The Concrete Span Bridge in Winter 2008

The Hamlet Gets a Name

N.T. Hagen and the Sundre Post Office

1909 would prove to be a very significant year for the little community that was slowly expanding along the banks of the Red Deer River. Two years had passed since Sundre's first pioneer, David McDougall, had sold his holdings to Nils T. Hagen and his partner Dave Lee. Along with the purchase of eight thousand acres of deeded land Hagen and Lee also purchased the McDougall homestead, which was located on the banks of the Bearberry Creek, just south of what would become the original Stampede Grounds. From the log house that had been the McDougall home, N.T. opened Sundre's first real store. Originally operated as a trading post by David McDougall, the store was a boon to the residents of the tiny hamlet who had previously had to travel considerable distances to purchase supplies. Very little is known about N.T.'s partner, Lee, but it has been speculated that without his financial investment the history of the Sundre community might have read quite differently.

N.T. and his wife, Elizabeth, along with Mr. Lee, arrived in Sundre from North Dakota in 1907. Born in Norway in 1865 or 1866, Mr. Hagen was to prove himself a shrewd and able businessman, who, with the assistance of his wife and the support of district settlers, would be largely responsible for the early growth of Sundre.

Some of the land along the banks of the Red Deer River had been surveyed in the early 1900's, opening up the fertile valley to an intermittent flow of hardy pioneers. Several settlers, including the Niddries, the Fletchers and Colemans in 1894, had moved into the area but they had mostly established themselves on land several miles downstream from the McDougall holdings. A crossing at the Red Deer River in 1906 became known as the Niddrie/Fletcher Crossing. At various times, this crossing was also known as the Blackfoot Crossing. The first substantial flush of settlers to this particular area, which would become known as Derbytown, occurred as a result of promises of a CPR rail-line in 1904. When the idea of the railway was abandoned, many of the early settlers left and with the exception of a scattering of hardy souls, including the Niddries and the Fletchers, much of the land in the area was left vacant. It wasn't until 1908 that pioneers once again began moving to the area and

the Derbytown settlement established itself as the hub of the area.



N.T. & Elizabeth Hagen in the Early Years.

Photo courtesy of Phyllis Burke

The future of a settlement can never be taken for granted. While Derbytown saw considerable growth after 1908 and the Sundre area saw very little, within a few short years the course of local history would change. Trends can be altered forever by something as simple as a quirk of nature - a government decision - or even the actions of an individual. It was perhaps a combination of all three of these scenarios that eventually forced Derbytown to concede its status as the local trading area to the little upriver community that is now Sundre...and it all began when N.T. Hagen decided to open a post office.

As Mr. Hagen was to discover, opening up a post office was not just a matter of nailing up a shingle over the door of the local store. In order to send and receive mail, a community had to have a registered name. The little hamlet on the banks of the Red Deer River, first settled by the son of a missionary worker of Scottish descent, was about to take its name from the birthplace of a Norwegian immigrant.

Sundre, Norway, is located in the centre of the municipality of Ål, which is the largest community in the region of Hallingdal. Some people spell the name of the Norwegian community, "Søndre", which means "south", and perhaps it was spelled in that manner at one time, but today, the Norwegian spelling of the word is often the same as our

English version. Like our own community, Sundre, Norway is situated on the banks of a river but unlike Sundre, Alberta, Sundre, Norway has a history of a developed culture stretching back thousands of years. Of course, before there was Sundre, Alberta – before there was Canada – a diverse and vibrant culture existed here for many thousands of years also. As the first traders, the First Nations peoples established settlements, crossings (the river crossing at Derbytown, before the arrival of the Niddries and Fletchers, being one of them), trails and hunting grounds, but white settlers, the builder race, did not arrive in this area until a time which can be considered very recent history.

Despite the differences between Sundre in Norway and Sundre, Alberta, there are many similarities: Sundre in Hallingdal, is located amidst breathtaking mountain scenery where two of the main industries are agriculture, mostly meat production and alpine dairy farming, and tourism. The area is scattered with lakes and rivers and experiences long snowy winters and extreme dips in temperature. Alpine and cross-country skiers flock to the area, as do fishermen and hunters. Western trail riding is very popular, as are many other outdoor activities.

Once N.T Hagen had registered the name of the new Alberta settlement on December 15, 1909, he became Sundre's first official postmaster, running the post office along with his store from the McDougall homestead. Around the same time - after prolonged governmental debate and extensive surveying, a bridge was built across the Red Deer River at a point known as McDougall Crossing. Derbytown also got a bridge and it was completed a little sooner than Sundre's, in 1908, and became known as the Niddrie/Fletcher Bridge. Sundre's was completed in 1909 at the McDougall Crossing.

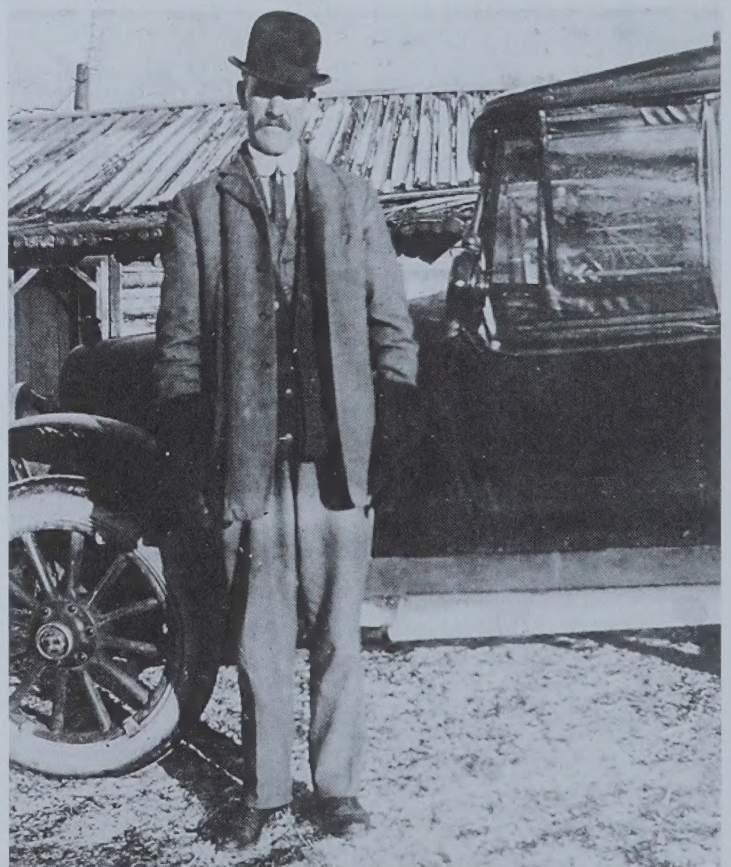
Years before Mr. Hagen established the post office in Sundre, other settlements in the area had already established mail distribution centres. In 1896, Red Lodge Post Office, near the Little Red Deer River and along what is now the Bowden Road, was where many area settlers picked up their mail. It dispensed the mail until 1903, when the Eagle Hill Post Office was opened. Mound and Westward Ho post offices opened in 1905. It was 1908 when Bergen first operated a post office and the first post office in the area west of the Red Deer River was opened at Lobley in 1909. Fred Lobley

was postmaster. Shortly after this, in the same year, the Bearberry Post Office opened in the Battensby home. The James River Post Office was established in the same time period. The mail for Sundre was delivered once a week, the actual day depending on the weather and the condition of the trails.



The Hagen/McDougall Homestead Shortly After N.T. Took Ownership.

Photo courtesy of Phyllis Burke



N.T. and Car in Front of Original Homestead and Store. *Photo courtesy of Phyllis Burke*

Once the Sundre Post Office was in operation, mail delivery to Sundre in the very early years of the

Twentieth Century was via stagecoach. Frank Fifield was the driver for many years. Outlying settlements would have their mail brought out to the local post office, if they had one, or individuals would often ride or drive a wagon into Sundre to pick it up.

It wasn't long before the hamlet of Sundre became the distribution point for several other area post offices, including Bergen, Bearberry, Lobley and James River Bridge.

Around 1910, soon after naming his post office and the hamlet it was located in, N.T built a new store and post office on a rise where Forget Me Not Flowers is located today, in the Sundre Plaza. It included living quarters for N.T. and Elizabeth upstairs and part of the upper story also served as a dance hall for the community and as a rooming house for new settler families and transients. (In later years, the Hagen's constructed an additional building west of the creamery, now Zim's Mini Mart. This became known as Hagen Hall and it was here that movie nights were held. By all accounts it was always a somewhat flimsy affair and was eventually condemned in the mid-forties. On October 17, 1948, it burned to the ground as a result of the spread of a grass fire.)

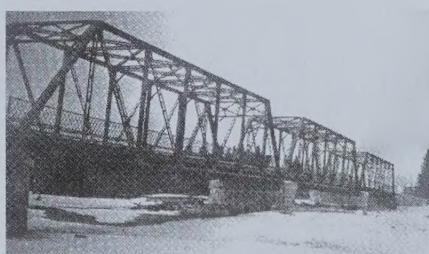


The New Hagen Store and Post Office Built Around 1910. *Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum.*

The Red Deer River is what is commonly referred to as a "braided" river. This means it has more than one channel. "Braid bars", which are often made up of gravel, separate these channels. The bars and channels are often highly mobile, changing constantly under the influence of high stream flow and flooding events. The unpredictable nature of a braided river is a real challenge as far as bridge construction and flood protection are concerned. During periods of high water, the main

channel is constantly shifting the gravel bars around, altering its own course. When it moves closer to the riverbank, it erodes it and sets things up for the next big flood.

Floods on the Red Deer River in 1912 severely damaged both of the recently constructed bridges, especially the Niddrie Bridge which lost an entire span. Repairs were made, but in 1915 both the Niddrie and the McDougall-Hagen bridges were demolished by massive flooding. The Sundre Bridge was completely rebuilt in 1916, but the one at Derbytown was again fixed up just enough to be serviceable. When it was wiped out by yet another flood in 1917, it was not replaced. Settlers from Derbytown, disheartened by the string of catastrophes that had befallen their bridge and perhaps weary of the difficult and dangerous manner in which they were forced to forge the Red Deer River to travel to and from Olds, began to migrate and set up homesteads closer to Sundre. This may well have been the turning point that changed the status of the two communities – the catalyst which swung things in favour of Sundre as the main centre of development and commerce while Derbytown began to fade into the mists of history. Some of those who remembered the old days in Derbytown, people like Minnie Cook (Niddrie), now deceased, tended to disagree. Minnie believed it was the selling of the Co-op Creamery and its relocation to Sundre that ended the settlement's chances of ever becoming a town site.



Sundre Bridge in 1915.

Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum & Gary Vooy's

As Sundre began to grow and prosper, postal services expanded appropriately. New businesses became established at an increasing rate as more and more settlers moved into the area. Nils Hagen was proving himself to be

an appropriate founding father for the little community he had christened. Eventually, as the years passed and he pursued other avenues of interest and commerce, N.T would begin to spend less time in the hamlet he created. He travelled to the USA for extended periods and sold and re-purchased

his store several times during these years.

Despite his absences, N.T.'s roots remained firmly entrenched in Sundre and he never surrendered his loyalty to the community and its people. Well into his old age, and many years after relocating to the USA permanently, he continued to stay in touch with and offer support and friendship to the people of Sundre.



N.T. & Elizabeth Hagen in 1920.

Photos courtesy of the Sundre Museum & Gary Vooy's

Others would take over the duties of N.T. in the post office as the years rolled by: Around 1918, Mr. A.P. Chase bought the store, although N.T. retained the postmaster's duties. Allan Taylor took over the store from Mr. Hagen in 1920 and Benjamin Aisanstat succeeded him in 1922. N.T. returned to Sundre in 1924 and became postmaster for a second term. He pretty well held that posi-



The Hagen Store in 1934 After John Macleod Took Ownership.

Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum & Gary Vooy's

tion until selling his store to Fred Jeannot in 1932.

By 1934, John Macleod had purchased the business and taken on the postmaster's responsibilities.

Cliff MacBeth was the son of an Alberta coal miner. He worked at several jobs around Sundre after coming here as a young man, including some time at the Hugh Pearce Store, a job he continued when the store was sold to Ed and Betty Knott. Between 1938 and 1940, Cliff hauled mail between Crammond and Sundre, before joining the army and serving in WWII. He married Peggy Payne in 1941, and in 1943 was shipped off to England. He served as a driver in Normandy, France, and also in Holland and Germany. When he returned to Sundre in 1945, Cliff operated a bus service between Sundre and Olds, and then drove a school bus for a while before taking on the Sundre postmaster position. At that time, there were approximately one hundred and twenty post office mailboxes. Cliff and Peggy had one child, Marian.



Post Office North of the New Red & White Store in the Late 1940s. It later became the Bank of Montreal.

Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum & Gary Vooy's

Many years before Cliff retired, the post office had been relocated from the old store to just northwest of the new Red & White Store that John and Rod Macleod owned at the junction of Centre Street and Main Avenue. Eventually, Canada Post opened a post office at 101 Main Avenue East. During his time as postmaster, Cliff served four years as President of the Alberta Postmasters Association before retiring in 1976.



Cliff MacBeth, Sundre Postmaster for About Thirty Years. *Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum*

When Mr. MacBeth retired, Annie Millard served as temporary postmistress until Norm Cummins was hired for the position. When Norm retired, Sandy Schrader filled the position temporarily. Mike Thompson took over management of the post office after Sandy, and was still in that position when the Canada Post facility moved to a new location. The Main Avenue East facility had served the community for many years, but as the population grew, so did the need for additional mailboxes and there was no room for expansion. A new building complex had been constructed on Main Avenue West in 1991. In 1996, the post office and mailboxes were relocated at the south end of the building that is locally referred to as the Post Office Mall. Mr. Thompson left his position in the late ninety's and another temporary person was hired. Karen Roberts took the job in 2001 and is still postmistress in 2007.

Ralph Ellithorpe delivered mail to Sundre from Olds for many years, beginning in the 1920's, and his mail truck was a familiar sight outside the Hagen Store. Mr. Ellithorpe, like Cliff MacBeth, also signed up during the 2nd World War, in fact the two enlisted at the same time. However, Ralph was officially too old to join up. To get around this, he conveniently subtracted four years from his age

when filling out his application form and the discrepancy was either ignored or overlooked by the military!

Tom Shaw had the Sundre mail delivery contract from 1943-1961 and then it was awarded to Ralph Bookless, from Olds. After Mr. Bookless, Larry Chrest brought the mail from Olds to the Sundre Post Office at 8:00 AM and then hauled the mail from Sundre to Olds at 3:00 PM. He did this for a great many years before retiring in 2004, at which time Brian Kochinski took over the contract.

When the first rural delivery route, RR1, was established, it is believed that Alberta Benner was the delivery person. There have been numerous contractors since that time. Today, Judy Leussink services RR1. RR2 was established in 1968 and serviced the Bearberry area. Two years later, Bergen was added to RR2. Sharon Jackson has been delivering to RR2 customers since it was initiated and is still going strong forty years later! It wasn't until 2001 that a new rural mail delivery area, RR3 was introduced. Colin and Karen Macleod have been the drivers for this route for the past six years. Colin is the son of Rod Macleod, who was Sundre's first mayor.

Effective Jan 1, 2004, the route drivers, who had always been contractors, became employees of the Postal Service.



N.T. Hagen in the 1940s.

Photo courtesy of Phyllis Burke

A hundred years have passed since Nils T. Hagen opened the first post office in the old trading post, once operated by David McDougall. When he gave the community a name, back in 1909, Mr. Hagen also gave all those who were to come after him a future. The old store, where Sundre's second post office was located, was destroyed by fire in 1952, several years after the death of the man who built it.

N.T. Hagen passed away on December 11, 1945, in California at the age of eighty. Elizabeth's death date is unknown, although it is known that she predeceased her husband.

The voices from the pioneering years are silent now, and many of the stories of Sundre's past are lost forever, but the legacy of a determined and humanitarian immigrant from Norway, who was known to everyone simply as "N.T.", lives on.



N.T. Hagen & Daughter Bertha in 1944.

Photo courtesy of Phyllis Burke



The Historic Hagen Store Burns to the Ground in 1952. *Photo courtesy of Helen Morgan*

N.T. and Elizabeth Remembered With Affection

N.T. and Elizabeth Hagen were not only Sundre's official founders, but also two of its most colourful characters. N.T. was a businessman, who with a little financial help from his partner, Dave Lee, along with a natural tendency towards shrewdness, and a little luck, soon realized that Sundre could help make him a wealthy man. Although known to be a fair and honest, he was a wheeler-dealer in many senses of the expression and was never one to miss an opportunity to make a few dollars.

N.T. Hagen was known by many as a kind



N.T. & Mrs. Hagen in 1940.

Photo courtesy of Phyllis Burke

man and was always willing to help out a neighbour. Being the first Sundre resident to own an automobile, a Hupmobile, built by the Hupp Motor Company in Detroit, Michigan, he was often called on in an emergency to transport people to and from the doctor in Olds, and he did this willingly and often during very bad road conditions

Elizabeth Hagen was, by some accounts, a little harder to get along with. She was known to be somewhat "sparing" when measuring or weighing goods for a customer at the store, always making sure that if there was an error, it was to her advantage. It is said that she would casually give a little stretch to a length of elastic when measuring, thinking that nobody would notice. People in the community came to know and accept her for who she was, but several of them found great enjoyment in playing practical jokes on her: Mrs. Hagen was in many ways a symbolic "First Lady", and it is said that she filled this role with considerable pride, which sometimes made her an easy target for a little teasing.

Phyllis Burke (Davidson) remembers that Elizabeth loved to sing and that she often placed herself front and centre at various community events as a soloist. Unfortunately, Elizabeth had no real ear for music and, even worse, she always sang in a very loud voice. For the most part, people were polite and tried to act as if there was nothing wrong with the singing, which, of course, only served to encourage the tone-deaf vocalist. One day, almost at the end of Elizabeth's song, Phyllis's mom, Margaret Davidson, who had been trying very hard not to laugh, broke into peals of laughter that echoed through the room, almost drowning out Elizabeth's final notes. One can only hope that a burst of enthusiastic applause was enough to save the day - and that Mrs. Davidson didn't need to buy elastic for a very long time!

Phyllis Burke inherited her mother's keen sense of humour and as a child she was often mischievous. She liked to play jokes on people and one day she approached Mrs. Hagen with her outstretched fist curled around some item, telling the storekeeper she had a present for her. Elizabeth loved to receive unexpected gifts and so she held out her own hand in eager anticipation. As Phyllis placed a newborn mouse, bald and squirming, in Elizabeth's palm, the lady's dismay was immediately apparent, but by the time her shock had time to register, Phyllis was long gone!

Both N.T. and Elizabeth Hagen were known for their enjoyment of liquor, even while prohibition was in effect. One story has it that during the prohibition years, the Hagens kept a supply of beer in the basement of the store. One day, a customer asked Mrs. Hagen if she would like a bottle of beer. Naturally, she said yes. The visitor went outside, apparently to get the beer, but unknown to Elizabeth, he snuck down into the basement of the store and retrieved a bottle of the Hagen's private stock! Elizabeth didn't catch on to what was happening until her husband caught the trickster in his basement, several beers later!

In later years, other humorous stories related to alcohol emerged. One of them involves a trip to Olds:

N.T. was known to occasionally overindulge when he got drinking with his friends, and sometimes it got him into some embarrassing situations.

N.T. and Elizabeth, along with Clay Robbins, an acquaintance from the Sundre area, went to Olds. Elizabeth had shopping to do, so the men headed to the Olds Hotel, where they were to meet up with her later. The time passed faster with every drink and both men were quite tipsy by four 'o clock, at which time, N.T. proclaimed, "We must get home Clay! Chores to do, you know." They had travelled several miles west when N.T.'s Model T suffered a flat tire. N.T. was in the process of installing the spare, as best he could under the influence of the alcohol, when a look of dawning astonishment came upon his face. "Clay!" he exclaimed. "I do believe we have forgotten Elizabeth!"

Mary Lund and her mom were at the hotel when N.T. and Clay returned for their forgotten passenger and Mary remembers that Elizabeth was "a little upset", to say the least. It probably was some time before she allowed her husband out of the doghouse!

N.T. sold parcels of land from his store and also, in later years, from the local bar. He was very unorthodox in his manner of allocating parcels to residents, although it was probably common practice then. After the money had changed hands, N.T. often told buyers to go to a specific area of land and then take a certain number of steps in each direction - this, he told them, would comprise the boundaries of their parcel. There was nothing official or legally binding about the "surveying" process and neither was there any official documentation, such as is required today in the

form of a title that could be used as absolute proof of ownership. This no doubt caused a nightmare of confusion in later years when these parcels were resold.

N.T. was a businessman and there is no doubt he made money through his various ventures here, but he loved the little community he had named after his Norwegian hometown and always wanted the best for it. In many ways, he was somewhat of a philanthropist well before it became fashionable to be so. As a founding member of the Sundre Stampede Association in 1919, he was the first to throw money into the hat to set up a fund for purchasing a permanent stampede ground. He also contributed very generously to the building of the Sundre United Church, even though he was not a particularly religious man and had not lived in the community for quite some time. He not only donated the land for the church, he also donated a substantial cheque to the building fund.

After N.T. passed away on December 11th, 1945 and was buried beside his wife at Mount View Cemetery in Pasadena, his estate froze his extensive holdings in Sundre because he had not left a will. This situation would remain for well over twenty years. Jack Morgan, whose father John was one of Sundre's earliest settlers, believes that having very little land available in town stunted Sundre's growth and had long lasting effects on its development, for the Hagen lands encompassed much of what would become the Town of Sundre.

In the late 1960's, Sundre Town Council, presided over by Mayor Neil Vanderzwan, was able to purchase the balance of the Hagen Estate for seventeen thousand dollars. Following this purchase, the Town sub-divided the property and made lots available for sale. A great deal of the development north of downtown Sundre resulted from this freeing up of land.

Hagen Manor, one of Sundre's three seniors' apartment buildings, was named in honour of Sundre's founder.

Establishment of The Bow Crow Forest

Protection and Management of Timber Resources

The federal government of Canada took over the control of Alberta's forests when the Hudson's Bay Company returned much of its lands to the crown in 1869. Two decades later, homesteaders were starting to trickle into the area and they began to take advantage of forested areas, claiming the trees for building homes and barns and sometimes for trade on basic necessities. Small lumber mills sprang up in various locations and there were few restrictions regarding the logging of these forested areas. Settlement took priority and the push was on to bring as many people to the area as possible as quickly as possible. Settlers not only used logs to build their homes and barns but they also cleared and burned tracts of treed ground in order to cultivate the land and meet the requirements of their homestead claims. Habitat began to change for many of the animals and birds that were resident in the area. Watercourses changed too and sometimes dried up; some native plants disappeared while others more suited to the new conditions began to grow.



**George Pearce at the Blue Hill Lookout Tower.
Mr. Pearce Built the First Tower in this Area.**

Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum

Ed Hunter and Tom Harvey were among the first of the head rangers to supervise the area ranging through the foothills, west of Sundre.

**Note:*

Mr. Hagen was known as "N.T.". In old records his first name is often spelled "Nels" or "Niels"; both of which are pronounced Nels. Mr. Hagen's name was pronounced "Nils". I have not been able to find the correct spelling, so for this part of the Sundre story I have referred to him as Nils.

Assistant rangers in the early years included Tyson Parker, Scottie Reed and George Copithorne.

The Forest Service and Parks Act eventually replaced the original Forest Reserve Act and in 1911 the Rocky Mountains Forest Reserve was set up and it included five forest areas. Officials had realized the critical importance of managing the forests, the waterways and the vegetation and wildlife within them in such a way as to maintain balance and to preserve the resources for future generations. The area west of Sundre was part of the forest known as the Bow River Forest but it was re-named many years later and is now known as the Bow Crow Forest Reserve.

Reforestation began in some areas of Alberta as early as the 1950s but it was not a mandatory practice in this province until 1966. It takes approximately eighty years for a seedling to become a harvestable tree.

A historic log cabin from the James River Ranger Station is now located at the Sundre Pioneer Village Museum.

Helping Guide Sundre into the Future

Jack (John) Morgan

Jack (John) Morgan is not only one of Sundre's original "native sons"; he is also one of the community's key early developers. Several of his many business ventures, usually made in partnership with others, have survived the changing times and continue to serve the community in a meaningful way today.

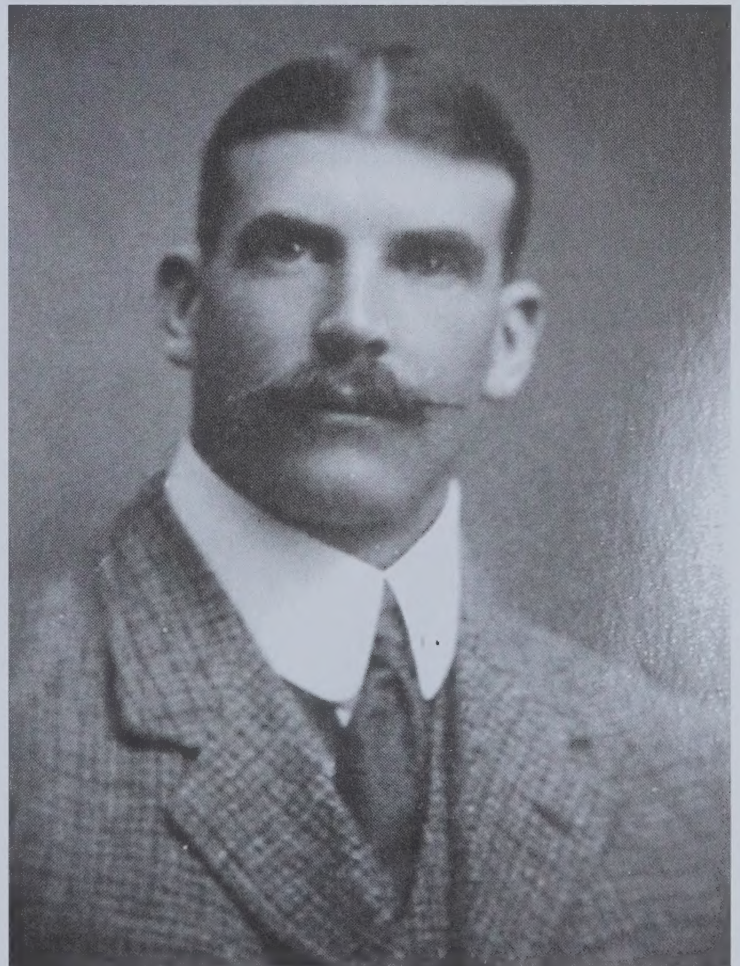
Born at Harmattan in 1911 to John and Elsie (Grange) Morgan, Jack is the eldest of 5 children and, in 2007, the only surviving sibling. His brother Dave, the youngest, born in 1924, and the one Jack refers to as "the best mistake Mother and Father ever made", still lived on the original family homestead until his death in 2006. Dave's wife and his son, Johnny, continue to run the Morgans' Harmattan ranch. Jack's other siblings were Jeffrey, 1913; Sybil, 1915; and Clarice, 1917.

Jack's father, John senior, was born in 1879 and came to Canada as a young man in 1898, with the intent of joining the Klondike Gold Rush. When this didn't work out, John and his brother, Charlie, came to Alberta. At Harmattan, John filed on the

NW¼-6-20 and Charlie laid claim to the SW¼ of the same section.

Edward Grange owned land at Zella, about four miles from that of the Morgan brothers, and his sister, Elsie Grange, born in 1883 in Cheshire, decided to come and visit him by boat from England. On the same boat was John Morgan's sister, Edith, also from England, en route to visit her brother John and cousin Charlie.

Fate has her own way of bringing people together and she worked her magic especially well in the cases of the John Morgan and the Edward Grange. Elsie and Edith became acquainted on the boat and discovered they were both heading for the same general area of Alberta. It was a natural inclination for the two women to want to see each other while in the Sundre area and so the two families visited back and forth. These two families became one when Elsie Grange agreed to marry John Morgan and Edith Morgan likewise agreed to marry Edward Grange! The children of these unions were not just cousins; they were actually "double cousins"!



John Morgan (Senior) as a Young Man.

Photo courtesy of Jack (John) Morgan

In 1903/1904, John, in partnership with Arthur Heaton, purchased land about thirty km west of Sundre from the area's very first settler, Harry Graham. Some of Jack Morgan's earliest memories relate to the cattle drives that took place in the spring and fall of each year, as the family herded their cattle between the Harmattan holdings and their west-country ranch. Driving the cattle from one farm to the other took two days and in the spring, the Morgans would stay overnight on land belonging to the Carter family, about two miles west of Sundre. Especially exciting to Jack during these bi-annual events was the crossing of the Red Deer River, which, especially in spring when the snow-melt came off the mountains, was often fast, deep and dangerous.



Elsie Morgan with John (Jack) Junior and Jeff at the Ranch in About 1915.

Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum



The Morgan Cattle Fording the Red Deer River.

Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum

Although John Morgan senior had chosen to be a farmer and rancher after giving up his dreams of joining the gold rush, according to Jack, he was

not very good at it. His background was in banking, not farming, and he had little knowledge of livestock management or crop production. He was also very conservative by nature, and this was not necessarily advantageous at a time when success was often dependent on a person's willingness to take a risk. Jack remembers carrying the lantern when he accompanied his dad to the cow barn at milking time. He was five at the time and it wasn't long before he was milking the cows himself and, in his own words, "doing a very good job of it". When he was a little older, his dad put him in charge of seeding the land for the fall crop. Jack plowed five acres a day with a team of four horses, and it still amazes him that many years later, when he purchased land in Saskatchewan, he had a machine that could work thirty-five acres of land *an hour*!

In 1926, Jack's dad's partnership with Mr. Heaton came to an end when the decision was made to sell the ranch out west. John invested his proceeds in stocks. Being the conservative man he was, he probably thought this was a safe place for the money, but he would have been much better off buying more land because three years later, with the 1929 stock market crash, he lost fifty per cent of his investment. Jack decided he could not continue devoting his entire life to the family farm, and began to look for ways to make an independent living.

In 1932, Jack's mother, a direct descendent of the wealthy Ravenscroft family, who had inherited some money from her mother's estate in England six years earlier, loaned her twenty-one-year-old son nine hundred dollars to purchase a two ton, dual wheeled truck. It was the first such vehicle to be brought into the area and it marked the beginning of Jack's business career in the district. His first contract involved hauling wheat from eight miles west of Didsbury to the Didsbury grain elevator at a payment of two cents per bushel. It was very hard work because all the grain had to be shovelled by hand, but it was the beginning of a business and within six months Jack was able to pay off his loan from his mother. For some time it was the transportation of grain each fall that provided the bread and butter from the fledgling company. However, a major change came about when, at the request of his father, Jack agreed to haul some Tamarack posts from "Tamarack Scott", who lived a mile west of the James River Store.

After picking up the posts, Jack went to pay

for them at the Scott home. The shack the family lived in still had a dirt floor and a sod roof, while many other area settlers had been able to build new and better houses. Of course, it was the early part of the depression years too, so there were many very poor families. A woman answered the door, with two little children at her skirts. They were obviously poor and very hungry. This fact was reinforced when Jack met the man of the house, who was thin to the point of gauntness. The man begged Jack to come back and buy another load of posts from him and to bring the family some groceries in payment. Jack was very moved by the plight of the family and agreed to do whatever he could to help them. When he went to pick up the groceries for the Scott family at the Red and White Store, owned by John Macleod, he mentioned what he was doing with the groceries and John in turn told Jack about his yard full of posts, a commodity which many customers used to pay for groceries because cash was so short in those days. This casual conversation led to the formation of Sundre Contracting Company: John asked Jack if it was possible he could sell some of the excess supplies of lumber in Calgary and Jack agreed to give it a try. It worked well for everyone concerned because buyers were found by the names of Buchan and Willumsen and a steady market evolved from this arrangement. Another dimension was added to Jack's services when he began hauling groceries for the Red & White Store on his return trips from Calgary.

With the start of WWII, Buchan and Willumsen began to build barracks for the War Department, resulting in an increase in sales for John Macleod and a steady business for Jack Morgan. A partnership was formed between Macleod and Morgan. A little later, Nate Ellithorpe became a third partner and the Sundre Contracting Company was born. By 1947, the three men had expanded their operations and opened the Sundre Lumber Company.

The Morgan/Macleod/Ellithorpe partnership was dissolved in 1957 and the Sundre Lumber Company was sold to Revelstoke Lumber. Nate Ellithorpe and Jack Morgan retained ownership of Sundre Contracting, eventually selling out to the Ed Harder family in the 'seventies. But the end of these companies did not mean Jack Morgan was turning his back on commercial development in Sundre. In 1941 Jack, with his cousin Trevor Morgan, had started the automotive company that be-

came known as Sundre Motors and this continued to be a very viable business. In 1952, after purchasing an airplane, Jack founded the Sundre Airport. Jack did not fly his own plane, considering himself too old for flying lessons at the age of forty. Instead, he hired pilot Charlie Hodges to transport him to and from the Blood Indian Reserve in Southern Alberta, where he leased land in partnership with Chester and Lloyd Mjolsness, under the name of M&M Farming Company. Jack was the founding member of the Sundre Flying Club, and a short time after its formation, when Charlie Hodges left his employ; he did indeed learn to fly and did not retire his wings until he was well into his senior years.

In 1954, when the Sundre Hotel was under construction, it ran into serious financial difficulties, due to the sudden death of the builder and the inability of the owners to settle their account with his estate. Jack Morgan invited local businessmen to join him as shareholders in the purchase of the hotel. In 1954, Sundre Investments consisted of seven shareholders: Rod Macleod; Reg Morris; Nate and Bessie Ellithorpe, Everett Vennard, Joe Heaton and Jack. Although all of the other original partners have passed away, Jack has continued to maintain his business interests in the hotel.

Jack was married to the former Winnifred Smith of Calgary, and the couple had four children together – twins, Donna and Donald, and Billy and Joan. In 2007 he lives on his Westward Ho area farm with his long-time business partner and companion, Genoa Colins. The couple enjoy a quiet life now, but Jack's interest in the community he helped develop has stayed strong.

In 2008, at the age of ninety-seven, Jack's mind is sharp and he still gives strong voice to his opinions and ideas when it comes to what he believes is best for Sundre. He has seen Sundre grow from the tiny hamlet of his youth to the bustling boomtown it has become in the early part of the twenty-first century. He was witness to the N.T. Hagen era; the founding of a village and then a town; the effects of two World Wars and the Great Depression; numerous floods and fires; the major oil and gas development of the fifties and the eighties; the town's biggest challenges, its various disappointments and tragedies, and its greatest successes. There is no doubt that as the years pass and Sundre continues to add chapters to its rich and diverse history, John (Jack) Morgan's legacy,

along with those of his early business partners, and combined with his willingness to take a chance on Sundre's future, will not soon be forgotten.

One of the Sundre Area's Native Sons

Trevor Morgan 1912 – 2007

Born on May 1, 1912, Trevor Morgan came into the world in the Harmattan area on a stormy spring day and left it quietly, almost 95 years later, on March 31, 2007, in Olds. The years between spanned two World Wars; the Great Depression; the discovery of Penicillin; the invention of television; the invention and proliferation of nuclear weapons and, eventually, the dawning of the age of computer technology. Children of Trevor's generation witnessed the magic of early flight; the evolution of the electric washing machine and the gradual transition from horse drawn vehicles to motor cars, a fact that is not without significance, as automobiles would one day play a central role in Trevor's life.

Trevor was the only child of Edwin and Evelyn Morgan, who left England in 1904 to join Edwin's brothers, John and Charlie, in Alberta. Edwin was an electrical engineer by profession and over the years he passed his skills on to his son, enabling Trevor to eventually get his electrician ticket, which in turn helped lead to bringing electrical power to Sundre.

After completing his basic schooling in Harmattan, Trevor enrolled in the Prophetic Bible Institute in Calgary. William Aberhart, who would become Premier of Alberta and leader of its first Social Credit government between 1935 and 1943, was the head teacher at that time. One of Trevor's fellow pupils was Ernest Manning, who later succeeded Aberhart as Alberta Premier for the Social Credit Party and remained in that position for twenty-five years. Manning's son, Preston, founded the Reform Party of Canada and the Canadian Reform Conservative Alliance.

After two years under Aberhart's tutorage, Trevor continued his education at Three Hills, and then at Red Deer, eventually being ordained as a minister of the Church of the Nazarene.

In 1933, Trevor Morgan and Helen Moore were married. Helen was born in 1909 in the USA,

and came with her father and family to the Olds/Sundre area in 1914. Members of the Moore family still farm in the Harmattan district. In the year following their marriage, the young couple embarked on mission work in Alberta and British Columbia. Neither of them was in good health, and after eight years of mission work, this had an influence on their decision to leave this vocation. Trevor's cousin, John (Jack) Morgan, junior, had purchased a garage in Sundre in 1941 from Hugh Pearce and was looking for a manager. He offered the position to Trevor and this soon led to a partnership between the two men and to the beginning of the long history of Sundre Motors Ltd.

In 1948, Trevor and Helen moved into the house on 1st Street, behind Sundre Motors, which they would occupy together until Helen passed away in 1999.

During the early years of the management of Sundre Motors, Trevor also worked as a mechanic, an electrician and a TV and radio repairman. He was instrumental in helping bring a reliable source of electricity to Sundre in the late 1940's, and by 1961 was the founder of a group committed to bringing natural gas to Sundre residences and businesses, working closely with Town Council in many aspects of this endeavour. He also served as



Trevor Morgan.

Photo courtesy of Sundre Hospital archives

Sundre representative to the Olds Hospital Board and was one of the founding members of the original Sundre Hospital Board, along with E. Peske, Muriel Eskrick, W. Shrader and Rod Macleod. He certainly played a large role, along with many other dedicated people in the 1960's, in successfully bringing a hospital to Sundre.

In the meantime, Helen Morgan, a talented musician, was very involved with charity work in her community and, through her initial efforts to provide clothing and supplies for the many poor families in the area, went on to become the founder of the Sundre Thrift Shop, which for many years has provided funding, through the Ladies Hospital Auxiliary, for equipment for the Sundre Hospital. Helen also founded the Sundre Christian Women's Club, which became one of the most successful of these groups in the province, as well as The Hiding Place, a tearoom and Christian bookshop, which operated for several years on Centre Street. Four children were born to Helen and Trevor: Carole, who in later years followed a career in nursing; Sharon, who earned a degree in music; Herb, who earned his Business Administration degree and then became a missionary pilot, and Ed, who also completed a Business Administration degree and then joined Trevor at Sundre Motors, eventually taking over from his father as general manager in 1972.

Following his retirement from the G.M. dealership, Trevor continued to be active in the community, serving for a time as Chairman of the Sundre Hospital Board; assisting Ed with accounting and handyman services at Sundre Motors, and continuing to contribute expertise and labour to the Nazarene Bible Camp at Harmattan.

Throughout his long life, Trevor, served his community with quiet dignity and unshakable faith. His talents were many and he shared these with his neighbours, both in business and in his leisure time, helping to shape the future of Sundre.

Aviation Champion was Mechanic for N.T. Hagen

Pilot Charlie Hodges

Charlie Hodges was born in Somerset, England on February 17, 1899. His grandparents emigrated

to Canada in 1905 and a short time later Charlie, age six, his brother, Victor, and his dad and step-mother followed, settling in the Calgary area.

At the age of fourteen, Charlie was out on his own and worked in various capacities in many areas of Central Alberta, including Carstairs, Cremona, Olds, Caroline and Sundre.

It was while in the Sundre area that Charlie made the acquaintance of N.T. Hagen. Mr. Hagen learned that Charlie had a natural aptitude for mechanical work and hired the young man to work on his car and generally keep it in shape. He built a small garage across from his barn and Charlie was in business. As well as attending to his mechanical duties, Charlie helped out in general ways, often working in the store or doing odd jobs for Mrs. Hagen. Sometimes he pumped gas, which was a very different process than it is today: The gas was measured by the quart, with each quart being poured into a five gallon can, which was then used to pour the gasoline into the customer's vehicle. A far cry from the self-serve stations with automated payment methods we are so familiar with today!

Eventually, Charlie left his employ with the Hagens and went to work as a mechanic for Jack Kemp, in Olds, for a hundred dollars a month. He stayed with Jack for twelve years and during that time purchased a dilapidated Cirrus Moth Bi-plane, which most people would have relegated to the local dump. Charlie decided to completely rebuild the flimsy machine. He was married with a family by this time and had nowhere to work on the bi-plane – except in the basement of his Olds home! It took him two years, but at the end of that period he had an airplane that was officially inspected and declared fit to fly.

During his time with Mr. Kemp, Charlie had learned to fly, so with his plane ready to take to the skies he began a new career that would see him performing many airborne services to the people of the Olds-Sundre area and beyond, including the delivery of mail when snowbound roads to the west country made regular transportation impossible.

Charlie was also called on for transporting seriously ill patients to medical facilities and he was involved in many hair-raising adventures on this account. In very dangerous weather conditions, faced with a choice between his own safety and the life threatening illness or injury of a child or community member, Charlie invariably chose to

take to the skies and complete the rescue mission.

When Jack Morgan was in his middle years and flying back and forth to his Southern Alberta lease land, which he managed with several partners, he made the trips in his own plane. However, he was not a pilot and considered himself too old to learn how to fly, so he hired Charlie, who worked at Sundre Motors at that time, whenever the need arose. This arrangement worked very well for several years, but eventually Charlie moved away and Jack was forced to reconsider his options regarding flight training, earning his pilot's license shortly after founding the Sundre Airport in 1951.

Charlie Hodges' connection to Sundre and his contribution to the area through his airborne services was an important part of our history.



Left - Right: Charlie Hodges, F. Lobley, N.T. Hagen, Fred Jeannot, Fred Elder, Laurie Bullard, Marshall Green, Cecil Martin, Chris Nielsen, Ernie Pearce. *Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum*

Canadian Heroes for all Time

World War One 1914 - 1918

In the early summer of 1914 few people in Canada were thinking seriously about the possibility of a war in Europe. Many, especially those in the far reaches of the western frontier, had not even heard the rumours that were starting to build. Homesteading had seen a surge of new activity just a few years earlier as a result of governments actively promoting the settlement of the west, and individuals and families were fully occupied in

their efforts to prove up their lands.

Repeatedly, history has shown that nothing can ever be taken for granted and that circumstances can change dramatically with very little warning. Such was the case later in 1914, when, on August 4th, Canadians were informed that Britain was at war with a Germany that had already invaded Belgium and was steadily making its way towards France. When Britain went to war, Canada naturally went with her, and in this instance there was not a moment's hesitation. Canadians were united in their resolve to fight alongside Britain for the freedom of France and her neighbouring countries and to bring a quick end to the encroachment of Germany.

Settlers throughout the West lay down their pitchforks and their hammers and saws, exchanging them for rifles and gas masks, and cheerfully joined thousands of fellow Canadians from all walks of life, who believed that in a matter of months they would have helped defeat the enemy and would be home again. Two months later, more than thirty thousand of the first Canadian men to join the war, enthusiastic to engage the enemy but terribly under-equipped and unprepared for what lay ahead, headed for England in the largest convoy ever to cross the Atlantic. There was no notion at that time that the war would drag on for four horrendously bloody and disease stricken years, or that when it was over more than sixty thousand of Canada's troops would be dead as a result of the battles. This was an appalling loss for a country with a population of only eight million people, but it corresponded with the devastating losses of other countries: Among them, Britain lost seven hundred thousand men and France lost 1.3 million. It is believed by many historians that it was the loyalty and valour of the Canadian forces - the humble farmers and ranchers who willingly risked and gave their lives for strangers living nearly five thousand miles away - that earned Canada the right to call itself a nation. Never again would the country consider itself just an extension of the British Empire, for it had proved to itself, and to the world, that its people, its vast and varied mixing pot of nationalities, had become one.

Several local settlers lost their lives at Vimy Ridge, Ypres, The Somme, and other battles notable for both their intensity and horror.

Those who returned from the battles in 1918, some of them physically maimed for life, most of them with deep emotional scars that would never

completely heal, were equally as courageous and heroic as those who perished. For those returning veterans, with the noise of battle still echoing in their heads and dreams, the quiet of the scattered farms and ranches along the banks of the Big Red must have come as a form of culture shock. Yet, what better place than this, amongst caring families and friends and surrounded by the healing grace of nature, to mend their broken bodies and their tortured minds.

Sundre's veterans rarely talked about their experiences during WWI. Perhaps the medals they proudly displayed each year at Remembrance Day ceremonies were the best way they knew to honour those comrades who died in the mud and filth of the trenches. The Sundre Legion Roll of Honour at the cenotaph lists those area residents who died in WWI:

- J. Anderson
- J.W. Dames
- H. Ferris
- J. Mjolsness
- A.W. Pendle

The late Percy Blain of Sundre, born in 1893, was one of the men who fought at the Battle of Vimy Ridge in 1917, as a member of the 50th Battalion. In 1977, on the 60th anniversary of that battle, and at the age of eighty-six, he returned to France to take part in the ceremonies marking that event.

The Sundre veterans of WWI are all gone now, but they will remain forever part of the history they helped create, not only through their courageous liberation of Europe, but also through their quiet determination to carve out a new life in the wilderness that once extended in all directions from the Red Deer River.

In Flanders Fields

*IN FLANDERS FIELDS the poppies blow
Between the crosses row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.
We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.*

*Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.*

Written by Lieutenant Colonel John McCrae, MD
(1872-1918) Canadian Army

Floods Resulted in Relocation of Derbytown Creamery

Sundre Creamery

In many respects, the Sundre Creamery played a vital role in steering population growth away from Derbytown, where the structure was originally located, and into the little settlement which in 1909 had been given the name of Sundre.

Derbytown, located six miles north of Sundre, was for several years prior to 1917 considered to be the hub of the area, and as families and individuals continued to move into that locality, there was no real indication that this would become any different. Nature, however, can be a powerful motivator for change.

The Red Deer River overflowed its banks quite frequently in the early part of the twentieth century. It was not uncommon for floods to occur every second year and sometimes every year. After considerable public pressure over several years, a bridge across the Big Red was built at Derbytown in 1908. A year later, a bridge was completed at Sundre. Frequent flooding resulted in heavy damage to both bridges over the years that followed and in 1915 a massive flood destroyed them both. It was decided that only Sundre would have a new bridge and this was completed in 1916. The Derbytown Bridge was once again patched up, but destroyed by flooding in 1917 and finally abandoned.

The Creamery at Derbytown was also flooded in 1915 and its owners, the Yewell family, were driven out of business. That same year, the creamery building was purchased for a thousand dollars and moved to Sundre. Called the Co-op Creamery, the first owner-operators were the Krause family. Two years later they sold out to Peter Pallison and then, in 1923, Central Creameries took it over and sent one of their employees, Joe Heaton, to run it.

In 1913, Joe had set up a homestead in the Sundre area and had lived there with his wife, the former Jenny Blackburn. The Heaton's moved to South Dakota in 1920, and daughter Bessie was born there, but within a short time they returned to Canada when Joe took the Central Creameries job. On their eventual return to Sundre with the new job, the family lived in a little house beside the creamery.

Nate Ellithorpe worked for Joe Heaton at the creamery and his job was to grade the cream, in much the same way that a wine taster samples wine. There is an enduring story regarding one of Nate's experiences:

Nate would dip the ladle deep into the vat of cream and swirl it around some, then he would withdraw the ladle, take some of the cream into his mouth for a taste and then spit it out. Apparently, on one occasion, the vat was getting quite empty and Nate, going through the usual procedure, brought up the ladle and took a sip, only to come nose to nose, so to speak, with a dead mouse. It is not known what grade Nate gave to the cream that day. It can only be hoped that his boss did the right thing – or that not too many customers found stray bits of fur in their butter!



The Original Derbytown/Sundre Creamery.

Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum & Gary Vooys

Joe Heaton retired as manager of the creamery in 1936 and retired to the family farm at Westward Ho. Nate took over from him and retained Jenny Heaton to do his books, as she had done for her husband in previous years. Often, young Bessie assisted her mom in this job and eventually she

took over the job completely. Bessie, an accomplished pianist, and her boss, Nate, began dating, and in 1940, were married at the United Church in Olds.

It was while Nate was manager at the creamery that he built an outdoor skating rink just south of the creamery building. Sundre's early hockey teams used the rink for their games and when playing away from home, Nate transported them in his big truck. In the meantime, Bessie began teaching Sunday school from the Womens Institute Hall, located just behind the creamery. She also served as secretary to the local Sports Club, which organized dances and other social events.



Nate Ellithorpe as a Young Man .

Photo courtesy of Rose Vennard

In November 1945, the running of the creamery passed to Reg Morris, an employee of Union Milk in Calgary. Reg, who was the son of William Morris, a creamery owner in Wetaskiwin, would become Sundre's third mayor in 1963. In 1946, Reg married the former Janet Robertson, but before his new bride would move to the house adja-

cent to the creamery, where the Burger Baron is today, she insisted that sewer and water had to be installed Janet was adamant on this matter, and consequently, it wasn't long before Reg had the place fixed up to her liking!

Reg was still running the creamery when it burned to the ground in early 1947. He rebuilt it that same year and became the first local person to actually own the Sundre Creamery. Long time Sundre residents Dave and Phyllis Burke, who had just opened Burke's Lumber at that time, made their first sale when asked to supply materials for the new building. While the building was under construction, the creamery business was run from a small shack, which was situated between the old creamery and the Morris home.



The Original Creamery Burned in 1947.

Photo courtesy of Sundre Round Up archives

Being one of the few places in town with running water, close friends of the Morris family were often permitted to use the bathroom facilities in the house. However, at stampede time, when scores of competing cowboys descended on the town and needed a change of clothes for a night out after the events, they were granted no such privileges! Instead, they were allowed to use the shower in the creamery.

Besides dealing in milk and cream, producing butter and grading eggs, the Morris family also provided what were known as freeze lockers on a rental basis. Here, for a fee of approximately a dollar, local residents could preserve and store their meat and vegetables.

When Reg first took over the management of the business, the creamery produced 100,000 lbs. of butter a year; shortly after the government introduced cream quotas in the 1960s, those numbers dropped substantially, to 87,000 lbs. per year.

Because of the new quotas, farmers had begun to turn their attention away from dairy farming to beef production, and this had a big impact on the Sundre Creamery. Janet Morris suffered a serious stroke in the early 70's and Reg, realizing she would no longer be able to help with the business and would need a considerable amount of care, and also accepting that the future of the creamery was looking grim anyway because of the changes in the quota system, decided to close.

The Sundre Creamery had served the community for more than fifty-five years. Many of those years had been extremely lean ones for most residents and shortage of money was the norm rather than the exception. And yet, small businesses like the Sundre Creamery, while they may not have prospered, survived, making enough of an income to feed their families and pay their bills.

Ron Morris, the oldest son of Reg and Janet, remembers many happy childhood years growing up in Sundre. Like most children of that era, he and his siblings were expected to help out with the business when required, and this could mean anything from unloading ice cream, which was purchased in bulk, or making butter. They did this without question, for having the older children pitch in with the work was a normal part of any family.



The New Sundre Creamery.

Photo courtesy of Mary Lund

There were many fun times too: Ron's parents owned land that stretched from the back of the Sundre Hotel to where the Sundre Theatre and its predecessor, Hagen Hall once stood. Every year at Christmas time, a huge Christmas tree would be cut down and dug into the ground on the Morris property. It was decorated with lights, and children came from miles around with their families

These days, we mostly buy our milk, butter and cream at the supermarket - mass produced in sophisticated facilities that are far removed from the humble little premises that at one time played such a vital role in the survival of two early settlements, Derbytown and Sundre. The creamery building, along with three other local buildings, was declared a historical site around the turn of the twenty-first century.

Various Sundre and Area Papers Record History in the Making

The very first newspaper in the Sundre area was probably the Derbytownt Eye Opener. It is not known when this newspaper was started, but it was published on Wednesdays at a cost of ten cents a copy, which, considering the Sundre Round Up cost only fifteen cents a copy in the 1970's, was a pretty hefty price to pay to learn about events that many people were likely to have witnessed first hand anyway! In 1915 the local editor was Oscar Harrison, a local settler who was involved in the

The Sundre Hi-Light was published in the **1940s**. *Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum & Gary Vooy's*

It is not known how long the Hi-Light was in circulation, but by 1951 it had been replaced by The Student Observer – a very professional looking publication that had lots of well-written local news articles and advertising copy. The paper, produced bi-weekly, was edited and managed by the Sundre Student's Union. Claus Wirsig was Manager and Editor and several other students contributed. These included Francis Phillips, Roy Corless, Doreen Armstrong and Elmer Elliott. The newspaper was printed at the Olds Gazette.

We Write It! They Print It! You Read It!

SUNDRE, ALBERTA

VOLUME 1 — NUMBER 16

FRIDAY, JULY 13, 1951

Panic Seizes Ranger

Sundre Man Drowns

The community was shocked to word so soon. The death of Jack Hunsdale, 34, a Sundre Police Station constable, was announced today. The tragedy occurred last Thursday, July 5 when Hunsdale, while on duty, was drowned in the Sundre river.

Hunsdale was a native of Sundre, Alberta, and had been a constable for several years. He was a well-known member of the Sundre community and was highly respected by his fellow citizens. His death was a great loss to the community.

Pay Tribute To Local Fisherman

Reminds here a handsome guy, a fisherman, Jack Hunsdale, was a member of our group, and was a very good fisherman. He was a member of the Sundre fishing club and was a very active member. He was a very good fisherman and was a very active member of the club.

His death was a great loss to the community. He was a very good fisherman and was a very active member of the club. He was a very good fisherman and was a very active member of the club. He was a very good fisherman and was a very active member of the club.

OBITUARY

We extend our sympathy to Mrs. John Smith who received word of the death of her son, Tony Verry, in Drumheller on Monday.

Tony resided in B.C. but was in Sundre on his way to Drumheller at the time of his death. Mr. and Mrs. Verry are both well known to Drumheller for the funeral on Tuesday. They have other sons and daughters living.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS

We are sorry that we cannot give you more information for the time being. We are sorry that we cannot give you more information for the time being. We are sorry that we cannot give you more information for the time being.

SHOWER

Friends and neighbors gathered at the home of Mrs. J. Hunsdale on Sunday, July 15, to celebrate the birthday of her son, Jack Hunsdale, a young man who is now a member of the Sundre fishing club.

The community extends its sympathy to the bereaved family at this time. The community extends its sympathy to the bereaved family at this time. The community extends its sympathy to the bereaved family at this time.

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the Sundre fishing club will be holding a meeting on Friday, July 20, at 8:00 p.m. at the Sundre community hall.

Sports Highlights

Fighting and boxing are in the spotlight these days. Some of the notable events are: A boxing match between two local fighters, and a wrestling match between two local wrestlers. The Sundre community is very interested in these events.

LOCALS

Miss Frances Phillips, who is a member of the Sundre community, is planning to visit her family in the near future. She is a very good person and is very active in the community.

Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Verry, who are a well-known couple in the Sundre community, are planning to have a party on Sunday, July 22. The party will be held at their home and will be a very enjoyable event.

Mr. and Mrs. J. Hunsdale, who are a well-known couple in the Sundre community, are planning to have a party on Sunday, July 22. The party will be held at their home and will be a very enjoyable event.

Organize Telephone Co. at Meeting July 3rd

A meeting held in Sundre's community hall on Sunday, July 8, was held to organize a telephone company in the Sundre district.

Rain! Rain! Rain!

Over new weeks of steady rain have drenched the country. The rain has been very heavy and has caused a lot of damage to the crops. The Sundre community is very concerned about the crops.

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I would like to keep posted on whether or not Sundre shows signs of rain. I would like to keep posted on whether or not Sundre shows signs of rain. I would like to keep posted on whether or not Sundre shows signs of rain.

Some of the people who are interested in the Sundre community are: Mr. and Mrs. J. Hunsdale, Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Verry, and Mr. and Mrs. Frances Phillips. They are all very active in the community.

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Courtesy of Gary Vooy's

Another student newspaper came into being around 1956. Called "Blaze", this paper had many student contributors and many of the articles were in the form of jokes, poems and teasing comments and gossip about fellow students. Mr. Chris Marfleet was principal at this time and one of the jokes concerned his wedding anniversary:

“Mrs. Marfleet: Dear, tomorrow is our 18th wedding anniversary. Shall I kill the turkey?
Mr. Marfleet: Why? He didn’t have anything to do with it.”

The Marfleets apparently shared a good sense of humour as there were several other jokes at their



expense! We do not know who came up with the jokes, but Mike Wild was a frequent contributor of stories to this publication, as were Rudolph Norguard and Ernest Kuich.

By 1957, Mr. Ed Vye, as owner and editor, had introduced a more serious community newspaper, which apparently took part of its name from the 1936 publication. "The Sundre News Advertiser" was published bi-monthly and was put together in a very professional manner, with international, national and local news. For at least three years it provided much of the community's news and advertising.

Mr. Vye was a man of strong opinions and he expressed them quite eloquently in his column, "Vye's Views". In the premiere edition of The Sundre News Advertiser, Ed addressed the issue of the new stoplight, which was installed at the present four-way stop in Sundre and would remain there for many years, despite sometimes being a source of frustration to drivers and Town Council alike. In February 1957, Sundre had been incorporated as a Town for just over a year. Highway 27 did not extend west beyond the present four-way stop and, apparently, sand and the manpower to distribute it were in short supply:

"In our opinion the stop light at our main intersection has already presented some problems and these will undoubtedly increase with the coming of the warmer weather.

The alternate thawing and freezing will increase the slickness that most of us have encountered from time to time and, of course, the stopping and starting of traffic all helps this along.

We think this stoplight is an excellent idea but in view of the fact that all vehicles, no matter where their destination, must pass through this intersection we believe provisions should be made for sanding. This would also be a big help to pedestrians as well as the auto and truck traffic and personally we have no inclination to come off second best in an encounter with, say, half an oilrig.

As we understand it, the (main) highway ends at the east side of this intersection but even if it extended west there would not seem to be much chance that the Department of Highways would be able to cope with this problem as we have seen the sanding crews in this district once this winter.

Reg Morris, of the Creamery, has certainly done all he could to alleviate the accident possibilities by wheeling cinders but he just does not have sufficient

quantities of these to do a good job and personally we do not see why a private individual should assume this chore.

Could not the Town have a stockpile of sand handy and delegate either an individual or a firm to attend to this for a reasonable remuneration?"

This was just the first of many editorials Mr. Vye would compose in regard to the goings on around town.

The Sundre News Advertiser had a regular Court Report. Although serious crime was not a major problem for Sundre in the late fifties, the oil boom in the area had resulted in an increase in traffic violations and alcohol related offences. Minor offences were dealt with in much the same way as they are now – through the administration of fines. If you were charged with illegal possession of alcohol in 1957, it would likely cost you between twenty-five and thirty-five dollars. Obstructing a police officer, if you were foolish enough to attempt this, could cost you forty dollars or more, as could a charge of false pretences. Overcrowding the cab of a vehicle, probably a common practice before the days of extended cabs, carried a fine of approximately ten dollars.

The subscription rate for the Sundre News Advertiser was a far cry from what one would pay in the present day. At a dollar and fifty cents a year, less than six cents a copy, it could indeed be considered a bargain. Of course, it is important to remember that back in the mid to late 'fifties an almost new (1956) Ford Fairlane, with a custom radio and a speedometer that read nineteen thousand miles, could be purchased for twenty-seven hundred dollars – and there were no extra charges or GST calculations to add shock value to the purchase!

The Sundre News Advisor had some competition in 1958, when Jack McGonigal, Alf Thomas and Bob Rankin introduced the Sundre Star. Lorraine Coutts did most of the typing for this newspaper and for the first year it was a free publication. This changed in its second year of operation when a dollar a year subscription was charged, with advertising services provided at a modest rate. Unfortunately, the newspaper folded at the conclusion of its second year and by this time the Sundre News Advertiser had closed its doors too and the community was once again without a source of printed news. This lack of a newspaper became a matter of concern for the local

Chamber of Commerce in 1959 and Dave Burke, a chamber member with a long history in the Sundre area, stressed the many benefits a local weekly would provide in the district. His concern and that of fellow members, led to the introduction of the Sundre Round Up in 1960, by sisters Muriel Eskrick and Lorraine Coutts. The Round Up story is told in a later chapter.

The Brooks Family's Legacy to the Community

Sundre Cemetery

It was one of those unpredictable whims of fate that led to the founding of the Sundre Cemetery in 1926, although originally, more than a decade earlier, the intent was simply to provide for an emergency family burial plot.

Following the death of their mother, Mary, in 1915, brothers Ike and Rueben Brooks made plans for the burial in Olds. However, a massive flood washed out the Sundre Bridge, making transportation of the body impossible. Instead, a group of men crossed the swollen river in a rowboat and made the journey to Olds to purchase a casket. They brought it back to the community in the same manner and Ike and Rueben laid their mother to rest on the family farm. The grave was located on a high hillside overlooking the Bearberry Creek, four and a half miles northwest of Sundre.

In 1926, in order to protect the burial plot for all time, the brothers donated four acres of land to the community as a cemetery. The land was roughly surveyed and pegged and the local Girl Guides Group, along with the Women's Institute, donated money to pay for the materials for a fence, which was constructed by volunteers from the district.

Unfortunately, there was no road to the cemetery at that time, but this problem was solved when a neighbouring farmer, Ed Coreless, donated land for this purpose.

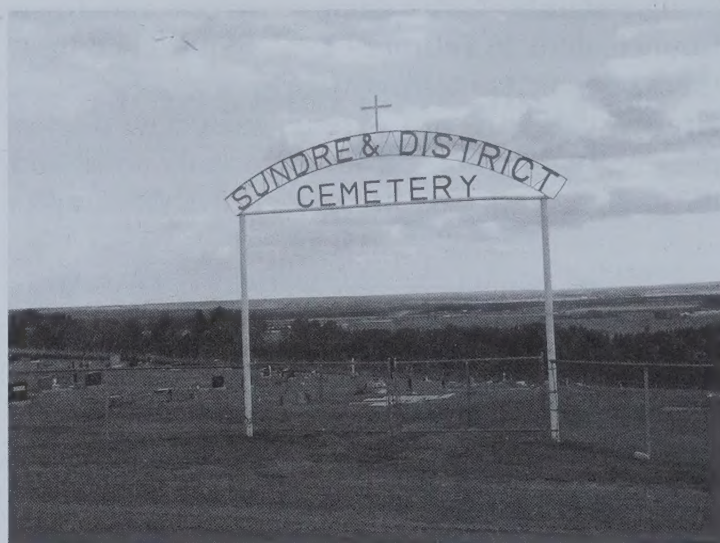
By 1946, about twenty graves dotted the little cemetery but many more have been added in the intervening years.

In a television show some years ago, a reporter commented that the Sundre Cemetery, with its inspiring views over the valley below and the

mountains beyond, had the most beautiful setting of any located northwest of Calgary.



The Grave and Headstone of Mary Brooks at the Sundre Cemetery



Sundre Cemetery Today

Moonshine Memories

Prohibition 1916-1923

In 1916, Alberta earned the distinction of being the first province in Canada to introduce prohibition. The legislation came about as the result of a plebiscite, after many years of controversy and concern over the problems caused by alcohol use in Aboriginal communities (whiskey trading) and in many of the early white settlements.

The Woman's Christian Temperance Union

(WCTU), and the United Farm Women of Alberta (UFWA) were gaining support publicly and in government during the early 20th century. Prohibition was one of the major platforms of the women who led the suffrage movement. Eventually, the pressure exerted by these groups resulted in alcohol being declared an illegal substance.

Prohibition certainly stopped the legal sale of alcohol and it probably helped curtail some of the cross border trafficking— but it did not stop people from drinking. All across the province individuals began to produce their own special brew of whiskey from stills that were, for the most part, well hidden from the probing eyes of the government revenue men. Bootlegging became a lucrative business for many a struggling pioneer, and the West Country, only just beginning to emerge from its wilderness status, provided an ideal environment for the concealment of the many stills in operation at that time. Some settlers brewed whiskey strictly for their own enjoyment, much of it only barely suitable for human consumption, but others, like Bearberry's Charlie Bloxham, who was reputed to be the great-great grandson of Buffalo Bill, perfected the production of moonshine to a fine degree and took full monetary advantage of the demand from Calgary, including orders from Calgary hotels, and from other area towns. Ultimately, the success of these illegal enterprises was short lived because in 1923, prohibition was deemed a failure and another plebiscite brought about its end.

Sundre School Fair Put Down Roots in 1917

Among a Handful of Fairs that Continued Despite Drought and War

In Alberta, school fairs rose from a modest beginning in 1916 to become highly esteemed institutions. In 1931, there were a total of 139 fairs. Over 35,000 pupils took part and submitted more than 160,000 entries. This record gradually waned during the Great Depression and with the advent of World War One; government support was withdrawn, causing nearly all fairs to cease with the exception of about five that struggled on. The Sundre School Fair was one of these, and so great was the interest that this fair has operated con-

tinually to the present time and is the oldest continuously run school fair in Alberta. The first school fairs were sponsored by the Department of Agriculture, and the first fair held in the Sundre area was in 1917 at Derbytown. In the 1930's, the fair was often held at the Sundre Stampede Hall, which was part of the Stampede complex, located close to the where the present hospital grounds are today.

By the middle of the twentieth century, the fair was held in the various schoolrooms at the Sundre School, but when the first curling rink was built in 1951, the fair was transferred to that location, where it stayed until a new auditorium was added to the Sundre School.

An adult bench fair was begun and held in conjunction with the school fair. It was felt that an adult fair would stimulate community interest and encourage the school children as well. This practice continues at the present time.

Money was short for much of the Sundre School Fair's history and grants were initially awarded on the basis of \$10 per school. Donations of cash and prizes were actively sought each year in order to keep the fair in operation. One particular year, Harvey McNight won 10lbs of Bologna and Mrs. Mary Lund won a 50lb sack of flour!

The Sundre School Fair, Sundre's oldest community organization, has been in operation for close to a hundred years and continues to represent the solid pioneering roots of our town. The children who participated in the fair when it first began were to become the citizens who helped build the foundation of Sundre. They experienced the struggles and celebrations, the fires and the floods, the accomplishments and the tragedies, and they worked hard to make a life for themselves and their families and to provide a better future for all those who would eventually call Sundre home.



Sundre School Fair. Date Unknown.

Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum & Gary Vooy's

Women Striving for a Better World

The Sundre Women's Institute

Perhaps when some people think of the world-wide organization known as the Women's Institute, they picture recipe exchanges, handicraft sessions and family picnics beside the river, and while these activities have certainly played a large role in the formation and ongoing popularity of the W.I., it would be a mistake to presume that the local W.I. is simply a place for housewives to get together socially and pass the time of day. The women who have joined these groups over the past decades have always been trailblazers – women of vision and empathy – women who believed in making a difference, who worked collectively and cooperatively towards that end, both in their local community and throughout the world.

The W.I. is a truly Canadian innovation, with the first Women's Institute founded in 1897, in Stony Creek, Ontario by Mrs. Adelaide Hoodless. It was originally formed as a method of educating rural women, with the purpose of improving their lives through studying domestic science. The idea, and the organization that grew out of it, spread quickly and the first W.I. was organized in Alberta in 1909. The organization's popularity continued to grow, soon jumping the Atlantic Ocean to Great Britain and eventually to more than seventy countries around the world.

There had been talk about forming a Canadian national W.I. group, but the First World War years intervened and so it was not until 1919 that the Federated Women's Institutes of Canada (FWIC) was formed.

Two years previous to this, in 1917, the tiny Hamlet of Sundre had formed its own W.I. group, as had Westward Ho. They were not the first in the area to do this, for the little community of Derbytown had formed the Derbytown, Eagle Valley, Lobley W.I. in 1915 and Eagle Hill had formed a group in 1916.

At first, the Sundre W.I. had no permanent home and members would meet in each other's houses, but by 1924 a W.I. Hall had been built, or perhaps moved from somewhere else, onto a property a little southwest of the present four-way stop. It is noted in the minutes of the group's forty-ninth meeting in 1924 that the members agreed that the

institute would incur no further expenses until any debts relating to the hall had been paid off. Apparently the ladies rented the hall out from time to time, because at the same meeting, members were informed that Mr. N.T. Hagen had rented the hall for a banquet.

In 1924, the executive of the Sundre W.I. included Mrs. Flora Bird – President, Mrs. S. Christenson – Vice President, and Mrs. John Rhodes – Secretary-Treasurer. A year later, Mrs. Elizabeth Hagen, wife of Sundre's founder, N.T. Hagen, was elected to the seat of Vice President, and remained in that position for two years.

By 1931, the Sundre Women's Institute had held over one hundred meetings and its membership continued to expand. Mrs. Susie Steen was President at this time. Other members of the executive were Mrs. Margaret Davidson – Vice President; Ruth Rolston – Secretary Treasurer; Directors – Mrs. Mill and Mrs. Scott, and Auditors – Mrs. Murphy and Mrs. Heaton.



Sundre W.I. Hall & Members in the 1930s.

Photo Courtesy of Phyllis Burke

Phyllis Burke, who has spent almost her entire life in Sundre, is the daughter of Margaret Davidson and she remembers as a child in the 1930s when the Sundre W.I. organized family picnics. There were three-legged and gunny sack races and peanut scrambles, and despite the hardships of the depression years, there was always lots of good food. Phyllis remembers several of the W.I. members of that time, including Mrs. Joe Heaton, Mrs. Ellithorpe, Mrs. Clara Bramley, Mrs. Pete Neilson and Mrs. Carlson from the Pinecroft district. In particular, Phyllis remembers Mrs.

McKillop, who lived just below the hill in the McDougal Flats area. This lady was a very dedicated W.I. member and, having no other transportation, she walked from her home to the meetings in the Sundre W.I. Hall and continued this practice for many years.



Sundre W.I. Hall & Members Sometime Prior to the 1950s. *Photo courtesy of Phyllis Burke*

In the 1950s Sundre Women's Institute joined forces with the Sundre Elks Lodge in a fund raising effort that is still talked about today. The two groups, under the directorship of teacher, Mrs. Ruth Sandulak, presented Joseph Kesselring's classic farce, "Arsenic and Old Lace" to the Sundre, Olds and Bowden communities. The play was a resounding success, with the aunts played by Mrs. Earles and Mrs. Doyle and Jack McGonigal playing Jonathon. Other actors and contributors were: Alf Thomas, Dave Burke, Rena Romyne, Allan Frizell, George Lutkekaus, Steve Stevenson, Irvin Dick and Jim Stubbs. The money raised from the play was donated to the Curling Club, the School Fair and the Sundre Library.

In 1967, the Sundre W.I. celebrated its 50th Anniversary. Sadly, by 1969 its membership had dwindled considerably. The town was growing, and with several other organizations available to local women, interest in the Sundre W.I. fell and the organization was disbanded. The W.I. Hall was sold and one thousand dollars from the proceeds was donated to the Sundre Historical Society and went towards the building of the barn in the Pio-

neer Village.

The old W.I. Hall, which hosted so many community events, meetings, church services, and was the first home of the Sundre Library, still stands, two doors north of the Catholic Church, and presently serves as a parsonage for the Nazarene Church.

Despite the Sundre branch closing in 1969, rural W.I. organizations in the area remain very active. They continue to strive for the betterment of society at home and abroad, and to have an influence in many areas of Agriculture, Canadian Industries, Citizenship & Legislation, Education & Cultural Activities, Home Economics & Health and International Affairs.

Funny Stories from the Early years

Nellie Blunt Saves the Day

One afternoon in the early twenties, an early fall blizzard swept through the district. Nellie Blunt's father and brother had gone hunting for game and as the snow swirled around the farmhouse, Nellie kept an eye open for the family's saddle horse, hoping it would return to the corral where it would be safe from the worst of the storm. Peering through the window at the near white out conditions, she saw a dark form move into the corral and, quickly donning her coat, she rushed out to close the gate behind the horse.

Several hours later, the Blunt men returned, disappointed that the hunt had not been a success. However, their frustration quickly turned to hilarity and gratitude when they discovered that Nellie, rather than securing the saddle horse, had accidentally corralled the biggest and best moose they had ever laid eyes on! The hunt had not been in vain after all and Nellie was the heroine of the day!

Drainpipe Pete and The Hunter

Around 1920, two bachelors staked separate claims on land across from Coal Camp. Their nicknames were "Drainpipe Pete" (because he was tall and skinny) and "Dead-stick Dick" (because his

land was located in an area burned by a forest fire). They both made moonshine and they both liked to drink it too.

One night, Dead-stick Dick visited with his neighbour, Drainpipe Pete and they set about drinking Pete's moonshine whiskey, which was stashed in a sawdust pile. They both got very drunk and fell asleep.

When Pete woke up, the old fellow had a real hankering for some more good moonshine, so he staggered outside in his winter underwear and started rooting around in the sawdust pile, which was some distance from his cabin. Now, bachelors in those days weren't too fussy about domestic chores or personal hygiene. They had no one to wash their clothes for them so, consequently, they took baths and changed their clothes very infrequently. Pete's underclothes reflected this: They were past the "grey" stage and awfully close to being black.

It just happened to be hunting season and a Calgary man, also severely hung over, was sitting on a stump, with his rifle propped nearby, apparently waiting for the game to come to him. He suddenly saw what he thought was a strange kind of animal rooting in the sawdust pile nearby. Shakily, he grabbed his gun, aimed, fired – and missed.

Drainpipe, hearing the shot and feeling the bullet whistle past his ear, took off like a bullet himself, with the red-coated hunter in close pursuit. Drainpipe thought he was being chased by the devil himself, while the hunter was intent on shooting the vile creature before him before it decided to kill him. They both were yelling and roaring at the top of their lungs as they raced around the sawdust pile, and just as some loggers from across the river came running to investigate the commotion, the hunter tripped and fell, knocking himself out in the process. Drainpipe Pete was very relieved to be rescued.

When the hunter recovered consciousness, he told the loggers he had seen a "horrible, long and skinny animal, almost totally black" digging in the sawdust pile. They pointed out that he had been shooting at a man, not an animal. The poor hunter almost went into shock when he learned this. He thought he must have been suffering from the D.T.'s. He gave up alcohol right there and then, and the story goes that he remained a teetotaler for the rest of his days.

As for "Drainpipe Pete" and his buddy, "Dead-stick Dick", perhaps from then on they decided to hide their alcohol a little closer to home!

The Sundre Stampede

First Rodeos Held on Area Farms

By some accounts, the first Sundre Rodeo was held in 1916 at the Melvin Corless farm, but Jack Morgan remembers the first rodeo being put on by a Mexican trick rider in 1918, at a farm about one mile west of Sundre and on the north side of the road, possibly owned by Dick Brown. These early rodeos were combined with an annual community picnic and included events such as steer riding, which was very popular with the attending families.

It wasn't until 1919 that a Stampede Association was formed and the rodeo was given official status. Founding members of the new association included N.T. Hagen, William Dominy, Howard Steen, Jack Schrader, Bert Botham, Pete Mckay, Fred Jeannot, Harry Griswold, Tom MacRae, Lum Sheets, Ed Corless and Orville Yancy, who was the first manager. Later members included Joe Heaton and Dick Brown. Dick took over as manager from Mr. Yancy. The rodeo became known as the Sundre Stampede.



Local Man, Ike Brooks, Competes at What is Believed to be the Sundre Stampede in 1919.

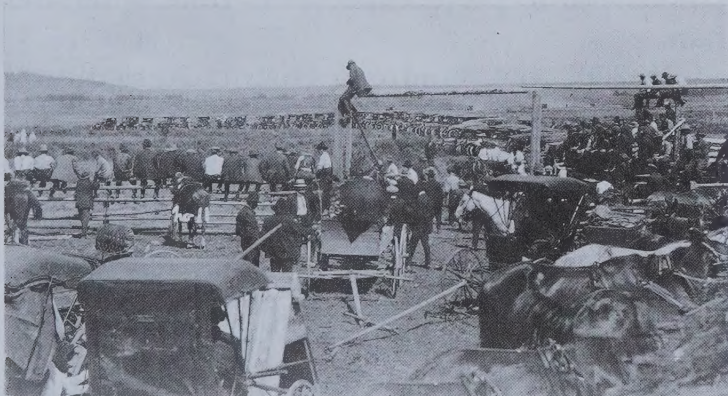
Photo Courtesy of the Sundre Museum

It was difficult to run a successful stampede without permanent fixtures such as a grandstand and corrals and so the Stampede Association members set up a land committee and fund. N.T. Hagen donated one hundred dollars towards the purchase of a property and other members each contributed fifty dollars each. They were able to purchase a property that stretched north from the present 4-way corner in downtown Sundre. Corrals, a

grandstand and a hall were built, as well as a half-mile racetrack, located near the present Sundre Hospital and Care Centre. The first official Stampede event was held in 1921.

Old timers in Sundre remember the Indian tipi camps that were set up on the grounds the week prior to the stampede. The aboriginal people sold handicrafts and participated in the rodeo. They also put on an exciting Wild West show in cooperation with local cowboys. The colourfully dressed Indians would come whooping down off Snake Hill on their ponies, as Sundre locals dashed out on their horses, guns blazing, to "protect" the assortment of circled wagons parked nearby. In appreciation for their participation, the Stampede Association provided a beef for the aboriginal people to eat during their stay.

Sundre made unofficial provincial history when it became the first community in Alberta to hold chuck wagon races. This is contrary to records that show the Calgary Stampede as originating the sport in 1923. The horses at that time were heavy draft animals and the wagons were those used by the early settlers.



Believed to Be the 1925 Sundre Stampede.

Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum & Gary Vooy's

Rodeos were held on a regular basis until 1939, when many local men went overseas to fight in WW2. The popular western event ceased operation at this time. Finances had taken a nosedive and the association disbanded. They sold the stampede grounds to Ed Knott, who owned Knott's Trading Post, for twelve hundred dollars and the profits were used to pay off the debt the committee had accumulated. There was enough left over that each committee member was awarded ten dollars back from their original investment in the land.

In 1948, Rex Logan, Pete McKillop, Stanley Hoszouski and Eric Jackson worked hard to get

the annual stampede, renamed "McDougall Days", back on track, but once again, the event was without a permanent home. For three years, it was held on property owned by Mr. Logan, ten miles SW of Sundre; from 1950 until 1954 it was held at the base of Snake Hill, a little north of its present location, on land that was part of the N.T. Hagen estate. The Foothills Cowboy Association (FCA) was founded around this time, with Max Leask as its Manager. Dave Burke, always a very active supporter of local rodeo, was Secretary-Treasurer, Joe Bardgett was Stock Contractor and Frank Seigfried supplied cows and calves. By now, the rodeo had gained amateur status and was being sponsored by the Sundre Legion.

In 1955, the event, still held at the base of Snake Hill, came under the sponsorship of the Sundre Chamber of Commerce. In the early sixties it was relocated to the general area it occupied and owned forty years earlier, close to where the hospital is now. The parcel covered an area of thirty-five acres, according to Rex Logan, who was one of three owners of the combined property, but according to official records it was closer to thirty acres. The other two owners were Betty Knott (Ed had passed away in 1958) and Howard Moore.

A parade, carnival and a dance were part of the celebration by this time, paving the way for the annual Sundre Parade and other rodeo related entertainment which is enjoyed by so many today.

For a short time, the rodeo was moved again to the Hagen land, with the committee paying one hundred dollars, plus repairs and maintenance for its use. The organizing group, like their 1920's peers, began looking at purchasing their own grounds. Provincial Recreation Grants had been introduced, based on population, and when the Town of Sundre received a grant for nine thousand dollars, they awarded half of this to the Rodeo

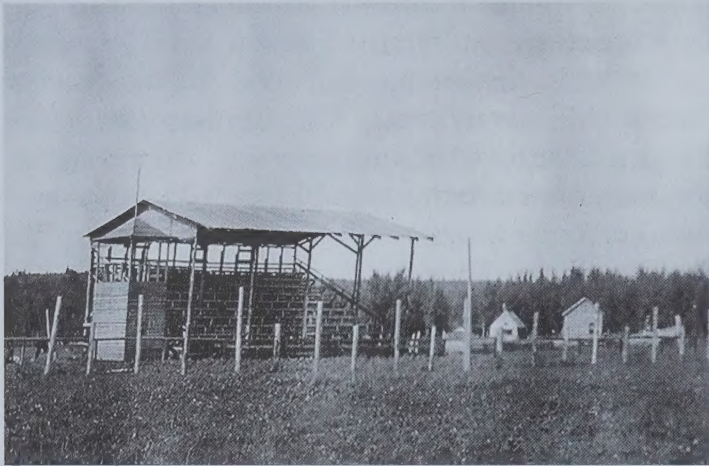
Committee. Dave Burke was asked to look into available possibilities and eventually the thirty-five acre parcel in the NE was purchased from the three owners. An arena, grandstand and racetrack were constructed. It seems likely the rodeo



Sundre Stampede in 1925.

Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum

would have continued in this location indefinitely, but by the mid 1960s the town was looking for land on which to build a hospital. The Rodeo Grounds were high on the list of possibilities and soon the Rodeo Committee was looking at relocating once again. A deal was struck between the committee and the Town of Sundre: The Town would take over the Rodeo Grounds for the construction of the hospital and would in turn donate a parcel of equal size for rodeo use. The Sundre Rodeo Committee was given full title to this thirty-acre property at the base of Snake Hill.



Grandstand at the Rodeo Grounds in NE Sundre.

Date Unknown.

Photo courtesy of Phyllis Burke

By 1979 there had been several changes, perhaps the most important of which had been the establishment of the Sundre Pro Rodeo. Gary Logan, who was a local man and an internationally recognised bronc rider, was among those who worked hard to bring this about. Unfortunately, Gary did not live to see Sundre's first pro rodeo presentation: On May 23, 1979, he was travelling by small plane with three other Canadian competitors from an event in Las Vegas, Nevada, to a rodeo in Cloverdale, BC. The ill-fated plane crashed in the mountains over a very remote area near Roseburg, Oregon, killing all those on board. Some hunters discovered the wreckage of the plane two or three years later. As a result of this tragedy, for the next twelve years, the Sundre rodeo was called the Gary Logan Memorial Rodeo.

1981 saw the introduction of the Rodeo Queen competition in Sundre and it has become an important and enjoyable component of the rodeo

event for the community and for the talented young women who take part in it. Competitors in this event are required to take part in fashion shows and public speaking forums and to demonstrate their skills in horsemanship. Once the queen and her princesses are selected, they serve as ambassadors, promoting the rodeo and the community at various functions and throughout the rodeo weekend.

In 1992, the rodeo name was changed, becoming once again, the Sundre Pro Rodeo. The event has typically been held the third weekend in June, prior to the Calgary Stampede, so as to attract the best of the competitors heading to Calgary.

The Sundre Pro Rodeo has grown immensely over the years and many improvements have been made to the grounds: The covered grandstand was built in the 1980's with a VIP grandstand built later behind the bucking chutes. The arena has also had its share of improvements over the years: Steel corrals were built; weeping tile installed to help with drainage; steel holding pens and feeding pens were built; plexi-glass was put on the main grandstand to protect spectators from wind and rain.

In 2007, the Sundre & District Agricultural Society has tentative plans in place to construct an indoor arena on the site. According to Rodeo and Race Committee members, this will be a real asset to the community in that it will provide a much-needed facility for local equestrian and agricultural groups, as well as attracting more visitors to the community.

In 1995, chuck wagon races were removed from the rodeo schedule, but in 2004 the chuck wagon races were reinstated as a separate event, held during the August long weekend Red Deer River Festival. Chariot races and bull riding were added to that program in 2005 and all three events take place on both Friday and Saturday of that weekend.

The Sundre Rodeo's long history as a much-anticipated annual event continues. The Pro Rodeo will celebrate thirty successful years in 2009, but the traditional atmosphere of the old time Sundre Stampede, now nearing a hundred years since its inception, has not been lost to the passage of time. Locals and visitors alike continue to flock to the three-day event, enjoying hours of family fun and excitement and cheering just as enthusiastically as the spectators did in 1916.



Best Dressed Chiefs at the Sundre Stampede in About 1930. *Photo courtesy of Phyllis Burke*

Historic Building Destroyed by Fire

The Miessner House

Somewhere between 1921 and 1922, Mr. Joe Schaffer constructed the building that eventually became known as the Miessner House. It was close to where the Sundre Flower Shoppe is today, 2 blocks west of the 4-way stop. Mr. Schaffer operated the building as a store for several years and then, prior to moving to Peace River, he sold it. Over the years it came into the possession of a variety of individuals and families. These included John Brady, who re-opened it as a shoe and harness repair shop, and N.T. Hagen. Walt Davidson took over the building and ran it as a meat market; Carl Christensen and his wife ran it as a boarding house until their retirement. It was at this time that Mr. and Mrs. Miessner took it over, continuing to offer room and board in the community.

Sadly, in February 1960, the Miessner House, like so many of Sundre's historic buildings, was destroyed by fire.

Calgary Couple Make Sundre Home

Sundre Meat Market Opened in 1928

Walter Davidson was born in 1899, in Ontario. He was the son of John James and Isabella Davidson. The family moved to Calgary when Walter was six years old. As a young man there, Walter apprenticed as a meat cutter.

Margaret Svee was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs Olaf Svee. She was born in 1900, in North Dakota.



Walter Davidson as a Young Man.
Photo courtesy of Phyllis Burke



Margaret Svee as a Young Woman.
Photo courtesy of Phyllis Burke

Walter and Margaret were married in 1924 and in 1927, with their eighteen-month-old daughter, Phyllis, they found their way to Sundre, settling in the Bergen area.

In 1928 Walt began to operate the Sundre Meat Market from a property known as both the Hagen House and, many years after the Davidson family occupied it, the Miessner House. This home was located just west of where the Sundre Flower Shoppe is today and, over the years before it was destroyed by fire, it had several owners and hosted a variety of businesses.



Mrs. Davidson Outside the Miessner/Hagen House. *Photo courtesy of Phyllis Burke*

Walt ran his butcher shop for three years and then rented a property on the southwest side of the Prairie Creek Bridge, which is located just west of the present IGA building. The family had a small log house here and a dairy cow business.



Phyllis Davidson, Aged Three, with "Team & Wagon". *Photo courtesy of Phyllis Burke*



Phyllis and Leslie Davidson Delivering Milk in 1935 or 1936. *Photo courtesy of Phyllis Burke*

It was the Davidsons who started Sundre's first milk delivery service in 1935/36. They kept the milk cool in a spring close to the house. Phyllis remembers the small handcart that had been fashioned for delivery of the bottled milk. By this time she had a young brother, Leslie, and the two would make the rounds, pulling the little cart to the scattering of families who lived in Sundre. Sadly, it was during this period that Leslie Davidson passed away at the age of four.

From the log house on the land on the Prairie Creek, the Davidsons moved to the Clearwater River, west of Caroline, where Walter and his brother, Jack, built the Clearwater Store – a building that is still in operation today. The family lived at that location for two years and then returned to Sundre in 1941, where they rented Mrs. Dominy's house, located east of where the A&W Restaurant is today. While living there, Walter started work on his own house a little to the west of the present IGA store. Around the same time, Walter returned to the trade he was trained for and re-opened Sundre Meat Market, this time in a building on land just east of the Sundre Hotel, which he purchased from Ellis and Thelma Sheets.

In that same area in later years was the Corral Café, run then by Frances McKillop. Lund's Jewelry was located close by. Burke's Hardware and Lumber Supplies was opened in 1949 to the east of these businesses and a very short distance west of where Short-Stop Foods is today. By the time the hardware store opened, Phyllis Davidson had

married David Burke.

In 1956, the butcher shop burned to the ground and if that weren't tragedy enough, in 1957 Margaret Davidson passed away after being diagnosed with cancer.



Walt & Margaret Davidson in Front of the Meat Market in 1943. *Photo courtesy of Phyllis Burke*

In 1958, Walter remarried, taking as his wife Clara Bramley, the widow of Joe Bramley and the mother of Barbara, Josie, George, and Hazel. Clara was born in England in 1906 to George and Emily Cartledge and she and Joe had been friends of the Davidsons for a number of years. Joe was also born in England.

Walter and his new wife reopened the meat market, located roughly where the Harvest Moon Restaurant is today, and where Pharmacist Archie McKechnie ran McKechnie Drugs in the 70's and 80's. Clara worked alongside her husband in the store for ten years, at which time the couple retired and moved to Vancouver Island, where they spent eight years before returning to Sundre in 1976.

Walter died in 1987 at the age of eighty-eight and Clara passed away in 2001.

Phyllis (Davidson) Burke believes her dad was a lucky man to have had two long and successful marriages, both of them to hard-working, caring women.

In 2007, Phyllis has many happy memories of her eighty years in Sundre. She remembers as a child of three years old having a dog that her dad hitched up to a small wagon for her. The Hagen Store had a hitching post outside and Phyllis clearly remembers tying her little Fox Terrier and wagon alongside the big horses while she went into the store. As she grew older, the tradition continued, with various dogs providing her transporta-

tion to and from school.

Most of Phyllis's schooling took place at the McDougal Flats School and then at Sundre High. As she grew towards adulthood, she was authorized by the School Inspector to take on a supervisory position. Consequently, she taught at both the Rockwood and the McDougal Flats Schools up to the ninth grade. Considering Phyllis was barely any older than some of her students, this was sometimes quite a challenge! Phyllis also worked part time at Knott's Trading Post.

Before moving to her present home, Phyllis and husband, Dave, lived north of the 4-way stop, across the Bearberry Creek Bridge, on the corner of Centre St. N. and 2nd Avenue. It was in that area, in 1893, that David McDougall set up the buildings for his homestead and Phyllis remembers seeing remnants of his log cabin just two houses east of where she and Dave bought their house.

A "Self Made Man" and the Woman by His Side

Jack and Lillian McGonigal

Lillian (Nelson) McGonigal is one of five daughters born to Frank Ormiston Nelson and the former Minnie Spinney from Nova Scotia. She was born in Millerdale, Saskatchewan, and the family moved to Sundre in 1929.

Fred Burke, who married Minnie Spinney's sister, Mabel, brought his family to the Sundre area around the same time as Frank did, and they settled north of the community.

Lillian attended Eagle Point School, located at what would later be known as the Dean Corner, about three miles north of Sundre. She was a member of the Merry Westerners Girls Club.

Jack McGonigal was born in 1916 in Haynes, Alberta. He was one of three children born to William and Stella McGonigal. It was in 1928 that Jack moved to the Sundre area with his family.

Jack was left handed, and although his earliest teachers accepted this and did not insist on trying to change it, he had a teacher in grade four who believed left handed children should be forced to use their right hand and should be punished if they did not. Every time Jack was caught using his left hand she would rap him with a ruler. This

became a source of great anxiety for Jack. Over time the stress he suffered led him to develop a condition known as St. Vitus Dance. It also resulted in him leaving school in grade four, never to return. Any further schooling he had as a young man he took through correspondence courses, and this is how he became proficient in leatherwork and taxidermy. Lillian always proclaims proudly "Jack was a self-made man".

Lillian's family rented the little log house that was their first home in Sundre. They kept a variety of livestock, picked berries and got their water from a clear spring close by. Her mom always said that the family had found a little piece of heaven.

Mrs. and Mrs. Nelson were both musicians. Frank played violin and Minnie played piano. When Lillian was a girl, her father would hitch up the horses to a sleigh in wintertime and take the family to dances at the James River Hall, which was a trip of about six miles. It was at one of these dances that Lillian met young Jack McGonigal, who was playing banjo with the "pick up" band.

Lillian and Jack began dating shortly after Lillian left school and the couple married six years later, in 1941, in Calgary. A reception and dance were held in Sundre, with Dunwoody's orchestra providing the music. During some of their courting years, Lillian had worked at Hog Anderson's sawmill, helping her Aunt Mabel cook. Every Sunday, Jack hopped on his bicycle and pedalled to visit Lillian at the camp, often in terrible weather conditions. He referred to these weekly trips as "Courting under Difficulty".

The newlyweds lived in a house on the east side of the river and Lillian, who had attended the Marvel Beauty Academy in Calgary, did hairdressing from her home. This was no easy task, as the McGonigals did not have power or plumbing. The ladies would go home with their hair in curlers and then return later for Lillian to comb out the "do".

Jack was operating a shoe repair shop and upholstery business at this time. But in 1942 he sold the shoe repair equipment to Don Cook and he and Lillian went to work for Colonel Snyder at Bar 75 Ranch (later renamed Red Deer River Ranches). Jack did a variety of work for the colonel, including taxidermy, and Lillian was a cook. At first, Lillian worked in the main house, preparing food for the Snyders' many houseguests, but she grew tired of this and asked to be transferred to the cookhouse, where she cooked for the workers. Two happy years were spent at the ranch, and Colonel

and Mrs. Snyder were very good to the young couple.



Jack and Lillian with Dogs in the 1940s.

Photo courtesy of Lillian McGonigal



Jack & Lillian McGonigal at the Snyder Ranch, Early 1940s. *Photo courtesy of Lillian McGonigal*

The McGonigals didn't have a lot of spare time and the roads to Sundre were often treacherous, so they rarely got the opportunity to visit family and friends in their community. Still, they had time for a little fun, with regular dances being held on weekends at the ranch. There was a shortage of female dance partners, as most of the employees

were men, but Lillian helped make the evenings more enjoyable by putting together a lunch, complete with cookies and cakes made from the sugar rations collected from the crew during the week prior to the dances.

In 1943, the big money offered by the oil companies around Alberta lured Lillian and Jack away from the ranch and to a rig that was setting up in Jasper. Their friends, Marie Mill and Steve Stevenson went with them. Between the four of them they had very little money. Unfortunately, the rig camp wasn't set up yet and the foursome spent their first night in Jasper sleeping on a park bench. They later found a small cabin and Jack chopped wood to help pay the rent, while Steve cooked for a local hotel. Marie and Lillian were kept busy chasing the bears away from around the cabin! Once the rig was set up, the young people were able to move into comfortable quarters. Jack worked as a roughneck while Lillian and Marie cooked for the company.

Lillian and Jack enjoyed having some money for a change, but all too soon the rig closed down and moved to Calgary. The McGonigals went with it, arriving on 8th Avenue to be greeted by masses of people celebrating the end of WWII. Unfortunately, the crowd had gotten out of control and the police had resorted to using tear-gas to restore order. This was Lillian's first experience with tear-gas and, she is happy to report, it turned out to be her last! It was while in Calgary that the McGonigals' first child, Carmen, was born.

The couple returned to Sundre in 1946 and purchased land in the community on the banks of the Red Deer River, where they built a home. From this location Jack rented out cabins and holiday trailers. Lillian was always known as a good neighbour and friend, and many remember her kindnesses to them over the years while living close to the river.

A daughter, Sheila, was born to the McGonigals in 1947, completing the family.

The family lived in their home by the river for almost 20 years and experienced regular flooding when the Big Red overflowed its banks. Floods of particular note were those of 1952 and 1965. It was the 1965 flood, which resulted in sixteen inches of water and silt on the floor of their home, that finally proved too much for the family, and they moved to land high on a hill north of Sundre, which they had purchased some years previously. At first, they lived in a small shack on the prop-

erty. It had stood empty for several years and was infested with mice and bats but - to the great relief of the family - it had a dry floor!



Jack McGonigal Strumming His Banjo Outside the Ranch in 1940.

Photo courtesy of Lillian McGonigal

Jack had returned to the shoe repair business in 1960, having purchased a second hand store on Centre Street from a Mr. Bigalow, and converted it to his purposes. But by 1970, the building he occupied was in a bad state of repair and a deal was made to move it off the property to make way for the construction of the new Credit Union, where the Greenwood Bowling centre stood in later years and where a laundromat is today. With Chris Marfleet acting as his business manager, a deal was struck, where in return for his cooperation, Jack was offered a space in the back of the bank from which to operate his store. In the meantime, when the Sundre Hospital opened in 1968, Lillian took employment in the laundry and remained in this position for fifteen years.

Jack died suddenly on Jan 14, 1979, at the age of sixty-three, and Lillian was left to cope alone and to deal with the various properties Jack had acquired during their marriage. She remained in

the home she and Jack had shared, north of town, for fifteen years, but eventually relocated to Hagen Manor, across from the Town Office, where she is very happily settled.

Jack was a charter member of the Sundre Elks Lodge and served on the Past District Deputy Installation Team. He was also an honorary member of the Sundre Royal Canadian Legion. Lillian is a charter member of the Royal Purple. She has also been very involved as a member of the Ladies Auxiliary to the Hospital and the Sundre Historical Society. The McGonigals' son, Carmen, is a teacher, and their daughter, Sheila, is a registered nurse. Lillian is very proud of them both and of her two grandsons.

The Dirty Thirties

Road Through Rock Cut Built by Relief Camp Workers

As the Great Depression stretched into the second half of the 1930's, lack of cash continued to be a serious problem for many local residents.

In 1936, William Aberhart had been Premier of Alberta for a year and his Social Credit Government was looking at ways to try to alleviate some of the hardships the province and its citizens were suffering. The party introduced prosperity certificates, which were issued as federal currency and, although not technically money, could be used in part-trade for goods and services. The idea of the certificates was to discourage people from hoarding cash in an environment that was already terribly cash-starved.

Each prosperity certificate had a cash value of one dollar and was valid for two years. However, for every week that a recipient held onto the note, he had to attach a penny stamp to the appropriate date on the back, which would have amounted to a dollar and four cents over the lifetime of the note and resulted in a small profit for the government. Naturally, workers were not keen to spend what little money they had in this manner and so the certificates were usually exchanged as quickly as possible – which left the responsibility of adding stamps to the merchants who received them. Provincial civil servants were the first to have part of their salary paid to them in prosperity certificates and the program expanded into the general population from there. The certificates had to be used

50/50 with actual cash when purchasing goods, but even so, they proved to be very unpopular, especially since the stamps had a tendency to fall off and get lost. Newspapers across the province began a campaign to boycott the notes and only a year after they were introduced, prosperity certificates were withdrawn. In total, 357,680 had been issued and all but 19,639 were redeemed.



	AUG 19 1936	AUG 26 1936	SEPT 2 1936	SEPT 9 1936	SEPT 16 1936	SEPT 23 1936	SEPT 30 1936	OCT 7 1936	OCT 14 1936	OCT 21 1936	OCT 28 1936	NOV 4 1936	NOV 11 1936	NOV 18 1936
NOV 25 1936	DEC 2 1936	DEC 9 1936	DEC 16 1936	DEC 23 1936	DEC 30 1936	JAN 6 1937	JAN 13 1937	JAN 20 1937	JAN 27 1937	FEB 3 1937	FEB 10 1937	FEB 17 1937	FEB 24 1937	MAR 2 1937
MAR 10 1937	MAR 17 1937	MAR 24 1937	MAR 31 1937	APRIL 7 1937	APRIL 14 1937	APRIL 21 1937	APRIL 28 1937	MAY 5 1937	MAY 12 1937	MAY 19 1937	MAY 26 1937	JUNE 2 1937	JUNE 9 1937	JUN 16 1937
JUNE 23 1937	JUNE 30 1937	JULY 7 1937	JULY 14 1937	JULY 21 1937	JULY 28 1937	AUG 4 1937	AUG 11 1937	AUG 18 1937	AUG 25 1937	SEPT 1 1937	SEPT 8 1937	SEPT 15 1937	SEPT 22 1937	OCT 29 1937
OCT 6 1937	OCT 13 1937	OCT 20 1937	OCT 27 1937	NOV 3 1937	NOV 10 1937	NOV 17 1937	NOV 24 1937	DEC 1 1937	DEC 8 1937	DEC 15 1937	DEC 22 1937	DEC 29 1937	JAN 5 1938	JAN 12 1938
JAN 19 1938	JAN 26 1938	FEB 2 1938	FEB 9 1938	FEB 16 1938	FEB 23 1938	MAR 2 1938	MAR 9 1938	MAR 16 1938	MAR 23 1938	MAR 30 1938	APRIL 6 1938	APRIL 13 1938	APRIL 20 1938	APRIL 27 1938
MAY 4 1938	MAY 11 1938	MAY 18 1938	MAY 25 1938	JUNE 1 1938	JUNE 8 1938	JUNE 15 1938	JUNE 22 1938	JUNE 29 1938	JULY 6 1938	JULY 13 1938	JULY 20 1938	JULY 27 1938	AUG 3 1938	AUG 10 1938

Copy of Both Sides of a Prosperity Certificate
Taken from a Sundre Round Up News Article.
Clipping courtesy of Rose Vennard

The thirties were difficult times for everyone in the Sundre area and would not begin to improve in any perceivable way until the years of the Second World War. Local stores were forced to extend credit to more and more people in the area and this made it difficult for them to pay their own suppliers. Area residents who were in a position to do so often settled their accounts with lumber, poultry and the occasional side of beef or pork, but this did not immediately provide merchants with the cash they so badly needed to settle their own bills.

Quite a few of the men-folk in the area took advantage of employment offered at the relief camp that was set up in the Coal Camp area. Here, they were able to earn a little money by helping with the blasting and construction of a road across the rock face of the steep hill bordering the Big Red. This area of new road, which replaced the old trail that meandered around and over the hill,

became known as Rock Cut. Today, after serious flooding on the Red Deer River in 2005 and consequent erosion of the banks, part of this area of road is seriously threatened by the constantly changing river channels.

Sundre area residents survived the many challenges of the Dirty Thirties and, like most people who lived through that era, became pioneers of the concept of recycling long before recycling became an environmental necessity. Nothing that held any potential at all for re-use was ever thrown away.

The depression years were tougher than any that the young families of today might ever have to deal with, but they were not necessarily "depressing". People came together to help out their neighbours, as Sundre people still do today; they celebrated and had fun together when the opportunities arose, contributing whatever they could to the occasion and enjoying simple pleasures and warm companionship despite the many hardships of their lives. Being of pioneering stock, they were strong, determined people to begin with, well equipped to deal with just about anything life might throw at them. These people were the building blocks of Sundre's future: Much of what is strong and positive and giving about Sundre today is a result of the endurance and kindness of the community's early residents and of their strong pioneering backgrounds.

Stepping Out in Style

Sundre's First Sidewalk

In Sundre today, we enjoy paved roads complete with curbs, gutters and concrete slab sidewalks. For us, there is no slipping and sliding through inches of slimy mud as we make our way on foot to the post office or the hardware store. But imagine what it must have been like in the early years of the community's development, when roads were simply packed dirt and sidewalks were non-existent. Some residents don't even have to imagine it – they lived it – either choking on the dust of high summer or sinking into the ooze of spring with each step they took.

It was 1933 before Sundre got its first sidewalk. It was constructed of slatted wooden boards and it stretched a short distance from the Hagen Store to Fred Jeannot's home, which was probably

very handy for Mr. Jeannot as he was the owner of the store at that time. Walt Davidson, who was the father of long time Sundre resident Phyllis Burke and who at one time ran a butcher shop from what eventually came to be known as the Miessner House, built the sidewalk.

Concrete sidewalks did not begin to appear in Sundre until 1961, when council approved construction of one that ran from Hassler's Trailer Court on the east side of the bridge to the 4-way stop, and another running north from the 4-way to the school, on the west side of the road.



Eddie and Faye Jeannot on Sundre's First Sidewalk Built in 1933.

Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum

A Man of Vision and Determination

John Macleod

Although it is Rod Macleod, Sundre's first mayor, local MLA, and champion of the hospital cause, who first comes to mind when remembering the old days in Sundre, his older brother, John, also played a very significant role in shaping Sundre's future.

John Macleod was born in Glasgow, Scotland on October 23, 1896. As the oldest of five children, all of whom were raised in a strict Presbyterian environment, he was destined to become a man of vision and of strong values, and at the age of thirty-eight he would find his way to Sundre and put his strengths into helping to build the community.

John's parents were Murdoch and Christina Macleod, and in 1911, they packed up their be-

longings and their children and boarded a ship to Canada. John's siblings were Donald, born 1898, Murdoch (pronounced Murdo), born 1900, Christina, born 1903, and Rod, born 1908. After arriving in Montreal in May 1911, the family travelled by train across their vast new country to make their home in Calgary. It was here that the children grew up and went to school.

On July 2, 1929, John married Hanna Agnes Ethel Long (known to friends and family as Ethel). Ethel's training and skills as a nurse would, within a few years, contribute to her becoming a highly valued member of the Sundre community.

John and Ethel had two children prior to arriving in Sundre: John (Jack) in 1931, and Barbara in 1933.

In 1934, the little family travelled to their new home, where John was to take over the Sundre General Store business, which he had purchased from N.T. Hagen. By default, John also became Postmaster for the community. He re-named the business the Red & White Store. The family moved into a modern house, built some years earlier by Fred Jeannot. It was the first Sundre home to have indoor plumbing and over the years the Macleods spent in the hamlet it often served as a hotel for travellers.

The old Hagen Store had been enlarged several times over the years, with extensions added to the sides and many outbuildings brought in to house stock and merchandise.

Arriving in Sundre in the midst of the Great Depression, John soon learned that running a general store in a tiny community was not going to be a lucrative business, at least not at first. Very few people had money and so the store operated more as a trading post, with goods and services offered by customers in exchange for groceries and supplies. John would take almost anything in trade, including coyote, squirrel and rabbit skins and lumber. Berries,



John & Ethel Macleod in 1934. Photo courtesy of "The Macleod Story" by Trevor Morgan

especially blueberries, were brought in by the pail load when in season and these supplied an eager customer base in Olds, where the fruit was less plentiful. Because of the depression, the large amount of lumber brought to the store from area farms in exchange for goods was not worth a great deal, but as the 1930's evolved into the 1940's, things began to change and the community grew a little more prosperous. The lumber industry, which had been stagnant throughout the depression, began to flourish again and lumber prices increased from an earlier ten to fifteen dollars per thousand board feet to around thirty-five dollars. This led to John becoming involved in two new businesses. First, in 1945, he went into partnership with Jack Morgan and Nate Ellithorpe to found Sundre Contracting – a business that is still in operation today under the ownership of the Harder family. Among other things, the three men exported timber to the United States.

By 1947, the partners expanded their operations and formed Sundre Lumber Company, which operated from a site on the Bergen Road and was the fore-runner of Revelstoke Lumber and then, eventually, Sunpine/Sundre Forest Products. Previous to this, Mr. Macleod had operated J. Macleod Lumber in conjunction with the Red & White Store.



Howard Steen & His Chuckwagon Team Outside the Red & White Store in the Late 1930s. Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum and Gary Vooy's

John Macleod believed in Sundre. His dream was to see the community grow and become strong and he was frequently frustrated by the fact that there was very little land available for develop-

ment. However, in 1944, a parcel of virgin bush near the present 4-way stop, became available and John soon bought the land, had it surveyed and subdivided and made residential and development lots available for purchase. It is a measure of John's dedication to the community that his first priority was not to make an immediate profit from his investment. In fact, Sundre's growth was so important to him that he sold the lots at his "cost". Residential lots were sold at seventy-five dollars and the larger business lots at one hundred and twenty-five dollars. The sale of these properties led to a flurry of new homes and businesses being built in Sundre and contributed to considerable growth in the population.



J. Macleod Lumber Truck Outside the Red & White Store. *Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum*

John's dedication to his community extended beyond his business interests: Prior to purchasing the land for the sale of lots, he had a strong desire to bring a school into Sundre. He had petitioned the school board to this effect on several occasions and was very discouraged by their lack of interest or response. On learning that the Eagle Point School, which had closed its doors in 1942, was available, he took things into his own hands and, with the willing cooperation of many local residents, had the school moved into town. Everyone eagerly pitched in to help with all phases of this project. According to John Macleod's nephew, Colin, soon after the move was complete, John again proved his deep commitment to the future of the hamlet by building, out of his own pocket, a facility that would serve as the community's first combined primary - high school.

Ethel Macleod was also to prove herself to be a very valued resident of Sundre through the mid

thirties to mid forties. Until 1946, Sundre did not have a resident doctor or community nurse, and although doctors from Olds did make visits to the community, residents were often forced to make the long trek to that community – twenty-six miles on a dirt road that was often in treacherous condition – in order to seek medical attention. As a qualified nurse, Ethel soon found herself in demand for the administration of first aid and advice. She gave her services willingly and is remembered with much appreciation by many of the older people still living in Sundre and area.

Shortly after he opened up the community for development with the sale of his lots, the old store was no longer big enough to carry the amount of stock that was needed and so in 1947 John Macleod built a new store to accommodate the needs of the growing population. The new Red & White Store, constructed on the northeast corner of the present 4-way stop, was one of the finest buildings between Calgary and Red Deer at that time. Some of Sundre's residents thought John was a little crazy to invest so much money in a fancy property out in the sticks and they didn't hesitate to say so, but John had never allowed the nay-sayers of the time to dampen his belief in the community's future.



The New Red & White Store Built in 1947.

Photo courtesy of Mary Lund

Shortly after building the store, John formed a partnership with his youngest brother, Rod, who was moving to Sundre with his family as manager of the brand new Red & White Store. Also around this time, Alf Thomas took over the management of the old store, which began to operate as Sundre Hardware. In 1952, Alf was set to open his own Insurance business, Ajax Agencies, and

FUR DEALER'S RECORD

Record for the month of JANUARY 1937

Name of Dealer _____

Address _____

Class of Pelt	Number	To Whom Sold, and Address	Date of Sale		
Squirrel	14	Haring J.	Jan 11	2	52
"	41	Wager H.		7	33
"	88	Hays R.		15	84
"	5	Steen C.			90
"	77	Stahms J.	12	13	77
"	11	Moore G.	13	1	98
"	77	Pacunas J.	14	13	77
"	21	Johnson R.	15	2	78
"	30	Vaccaron R.		5	40
"	14	Davidson J.		2	52
"	48	Cheney H.			
"	27	Stone R.			
"	27	Brown J.	16		
"	46	Hays J.	19		
"		Hawman J.			
Coyote	1	"			
Weasel		"			
"	1	Wells R.			
Coyote	1	"			
Squirrel	18	"			
Weasel	2	McClan H.			
Squirrel	486	"			
"	13	Lynd J.			
Coyote	1	Goodland L.	20	4	00
Squirrel	46	"			
Weasel	1	Garrow J.			1 10
Coyote	2	Torber			18 00

Fur Dealers Record Kept by J. Macleod in 1937. Photo courtesy of Colin Macleod

John entered a new partnership with Bob Rankin, who lived in Olds at that time, who would manage the hardware store. Unfortunately, the hardware store burned to the ground that same year and John Mcleod and Mr. Rankin relocated the business into temporary premises in the former pool hall. Eventually John built a new building on Centre Street and Bob rented it from him and operated the hardware store as his own business. There were two owners after the Rankins ceased operation, one of them being Jim Fox. The store was eventually purchased by the late Pete Claussen and his wife Laura. Laura continued to operate the store after the death of her husband but in 2007 decided to put the building up for sale.



The Old Red & White Store Became a Hardware Store.

Photo courtesy of Mary Lund

John and Ethel contributed the most productive years of their lives to Sundre and raised their children here. They saw the hamlet grow from a struggling cluster of less than a dozen homes and a couple of businesses to a community that had a real chance of ongoing growth, and they both, in their own ways, made solid contributions to this reality. The couple shared the satisfaction of knowing they had made a difference in the community and in the same year that the new store was to be opened, twenty three years after first arriving here, they retired to Calgary.

John was one of the founding members of the Sundre United Church and he was a promoter and supporter of the Sundre Power Cooperative, which was formed in 1943. He died on January

23rd, 1986, two weeks to the day after Ethel, his wife for fifty-seven years, passed away.

Fond Memories Endure

Knott's Trading Post

Ed and Betty Knott arrived in Sundre in 1935 in response to an advertisement offering a store for rent. The business, located on the east side of the Sundre Bridge, was originally run by Mrs. Alice Ellithorpe in 1928, who, with her husband, Ralph, owned the quarter section of land on which it sat.

In 1932 the store business passed into the hands of Hugh Pearce, who rented the building from a woman by the name of Mrs. Dominy. It was the Dirty Thirties and money was very short. Hugh worked mostly on a barter system and often traded groceries for lumber. Eventually, the inability to collect enough actual cash to pay his own creditors forced Hugh to place the advertisement in the paper for someone to sublet the building. The ad. read, in part, as follows:

"Store for rent, \$15.00 per month, including three living rooms and flour warehouse. Frame buildings 24 x 30. Heated by stoves, gas lamps, and water supply – a well. One competitor ¼ mile away."

In 1935, the hamlet of Sundre, although still small in population, was well established as the hub of the area and several stores and businesses were serving the needs of the district. There were two blacksmith shops, a butcher shop, a creamery, a garage, a harness and saddlery, a restaurant, two general stores and a post office. John Mcleod owned one of the stores, the Red and White, and Hugh Pearce was in the process of renting out the other. Two schools were located within three miles of Sundre and the road between Olds and Sundre, a distance of approximately twenty-six miles, had recently been gravelled, making travel between the two communities much faster and easier.

Ed (A.E.) Knott was born in London, Ontario. As a young man, he moved to Winnipeg, Manitoba, where he worked in a grocery store for several years. From there, he travelled to Victoria, British Columbia, where he worked in a feed store. The arrival of the Klondike Gold Rush in the late 1890's enticed him to move to Lake Bennett in the Yukon, where he hauled freight with a team and wagon. Years later, with the commencement of WW1, Ed signed up with the 5th Western Cavalry, 78th Battalion, in Winnipeg. He spent three years

on the front lines of battle and sustained several injuries.

The early post war years found Ed in Northern Manitoba where he tried his hand at ranching. Unfortunately, he lost everything he owned in the process and was forced to look for other means of making a living. With his brother, he moved to Cottage Grove, Chicago, and soon worked his way up to manager of the A & P store in that community. While in this position, he made the acquaintance of another employee, Betty Choisser, a woman considerably younger than himself. Betty and Ed married on November 20th, 1930 and remained in Cottage Grove for a few more years. However, the hours at the store were long and Ed, well into middle age, was not in good health. Also, the store had proved to be a target for armed robbery and having endured more than his fair share of being shot at during the war years, Ed called it a day.

Leaving the Chicago area in April 1935, Betty and Ed travelled close to 2,000 miles (3200 KM) in pursuit of a dream. They longed to own their own store – something not too far from a city but far enough into the countryside that they could enjoy some hunting and fishing. Western Canada had become the new land of opportunity and so the couple headed to Calgary, where they saw the newspaper advertisement for a store for rent in Sundre.

Arriving in Olds a short time later, Ed and Betty located the mail truck that would carry them to Sundre. Accompanying them on the one-hour trip was a Mr. Yett, who with his partner, Mr. Duck, was in the process of purchasing the restaurant and the butcher shop in Sundre. The Knotts' stayed in rented rooms above the Red and White Store while they finalized their arrangements to take over its competitor, which was located roughly between the present Visitor Centre and Tall Timber Campground, across the Sundre Bridge.

By May 1935, when Betty was twenty-seven years old, the Knotts purchased the stock from Hugh Pearce and rented the store building and a little cottage close by from Mrs. Dominy, who had purchased the land from the Nathan Smith Ellithorpe.

Earnie Pearce painted a sign for the new owners, which proclaimed the little store "Knott's Trading Post". Cliff MacBeth, who would eventually become Sundre Post Master, was the clerk at the store at that time and also served as a carpenter when re-

quired. Sundre's population then, according to notes kept by the late Bessie Ellithorpe, was seventy-eight.

In 1936, Everett Vennard joined the staff of Knott's Trading Post and spent almost ten years in their employ. His twin sister, Evelyn also worked there. Those years were very enjoyable for Everett. Ed treat him as the son he never had and the pair spent some very happy times and often went on fishing trips together. Because Ed didn't drive, Everett would transport him wherever he needed to go and this often meant a trip to the Ya Ha Tinda Ranch with supplies. In wintertime, the roads could be very treacherous and Ed was a very nervous passenger, especially when it came to manoeuvring down what was known as "Suicide Hill", where the road ran steeply down to the Big Red and was often covered with glare ice. Ed carried a bottle of rum with him on these trips, perhaps to ease his nerves, and had perhaps consumed a little of the alcohol on the day he absolutely refused to go down the dangerous hill with Everett. Stepping out of the vehicle, Ed slipped on the ice and slid all the way to the bottom of the steep incline. Luckily, he was not hurt except for a few bumps and bruises and, perhaps, some injured pride, but on that very day, he declared that in the future there would be "no rum until we are over the hump!"

The years went quickly for the Knotts and business was good. The trading post not only provided groceries and supplies for Sundre residents but also for smaller grocery stores in the surrounding district. Eggs were twelve cents a dozen in those days, butter was twelve cents a pound. A thousand board feet of lumber, planed three sides only, could be purchased for about twelve dollars. The Knotts also sold work clothing and a pair of men's high back suspender overalls could be purchased for \$1.49, while a pair of woolen work socks cost around seventeen cents. Times were hard and the Knotts took a variety of items in trade for supplies and groceries. Trappers often brought furs and several young men shot rabbits and traded them for merchandise. Large



Team and Wagon Outside Knott's Trading Post. Photo courtesy of Sundre Round Up archives

slabs of ice, usually about sixteen to eighteen inches square, were cut from the Fallen Timber Creek by Jack Davidson and Sons and stored in the Knott's ice house, which consisted of a pit dug into the earth. Each layer of ice was covered by a layer of sawdust. Once the pit was almost full, a heavy layer of sawdust was added to keep the ice frozen until summer, when customers purchased it for use in their own ice boxes or to make ice cream and cool drinks.

Customers to the store came on foot, on horseback, with team and wagon or a motor vehicle, and sometimes even by dog-sled team.



Dog Sled Team Outside Knott's Trading Post.

Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum

Many good friends were made amongst the steady stream of customers. It was a good life and Ed and Betty dreamed of purchasing the land the store was located on and building a brand new premises and a home of their own. Unfortunately, Mrs. Dominy was adamant in her refusal to sell. Eventually, however, she did agree to a compromise and the Knotts were given permission to build a log cabin behind the store building. Gerald Murphy and his son, Bill, picked out the trees, cut the logs and prepared them for construction. Dick Ladd, Frank Johnson and William McGonigal were responsible for actually putting the logs together and completing the building.

Throughout the years when they ran the store, the Knotts were very well liked in the community. Betty was a dedicated volunteer and belonged to several local clubs, including the Women's Institute. The couple actually ran the first telephone relay station from the store after John Rodes, from England, with the help of seven other men, installed phone lines in the Bearberry Valley. The set up was very basic and was known as the "Barbed

Wire Line". The twenty subscribers often phoned the Trading Post, which was connected to the line, in order to relay messages to points further afield through Betty or Ed, who were also hooked up to the Harmattan-Sundre Mutual line.

When the Sundre Stampede fell on hard times and the land which housed the Stampede Grounds was sold by public auction, Ed Knott was the winning bidder. In 1958, shortly before moving to a new home in that area, on what is now Willow Crescent, Ed died of cancer. Betty stayed in Sundre for a while, before moving to Eldorado, Illinois. When she left Sundre, she sold a large portion of the land Ed had owned to Jack Morgan but donated a considerable portion to the Town with the condition that a wooded portion of it never be sold but be kept in its natural state for the enjoyment of the people of Sundre. Those living on Willow Crescent today enjoy this beautiful wooded area near their homes which slopes down towards the river – a lasting legacy from the lady who loved the Sundre community and its people and whose name can still bring an affectionate smile to those who remember her. For many years Betty kept in touch with the many friends she had left behind in Sundre. She lived to a grand old age and is thought to have passed away in the mid to late 1990's.

The Knott's old log cabin was eventually moved to the Nazarene Church Camp at Harmattan. It served as a nurse's cabin for several years, but has since been completely refurbished and is now the camp's business office.



Ed & Betty Knott in 1958, a Short Time Before Ed Passed Away. *Photo courtesy of Mary Lund*



The Old Trading Post Building was Still Standing in 1962. *Photo courtesy of Mary Lund*

First Retail Lumber Sales Outlet Opened in 1939

Fred and Dave Burke Supplied Planed Building Materials

In 1929, Fred Burke, and his wife, the former Mabel Spinney, along with their eleven-year-old son, Dave, moved onto a small farm they had purchased the year before when visiting friends in the west country. It was located four and a half miles north and a half-mile east of the little hamlet of Sundre. The Burke family, from Saskatchewan loved the beautiful countryside that surrounded their Sundre area home and settled down to spend the rest of their lives amongst the lush green hills and valleys, that for many years would provide the fruits of their livelihood.

Fred Burke had little knowledge of the lumber industry when he began working as a cook for Chris Peterson, who was logging for Gordon Bradley, in 1932, but he was interested in learn-

short time he was one of the first in the area to begin using a Swede saw. Previous to this, the two-man cross cut saw had been the tool of choice but the Swede saw required only a single operator and so paved the way for increased productivity. Fred's long involvement with lumber had begun and his son, Dave, would soon join him in this endeavour.

In the summer of 1935, when Dave Burke was seventeen years old, he joined his father to work at the Stauffer Sawmill in the Bearberry area. Fred was employed as a steam engineer, while his son was hired on as a tail sawyer at a dollar a day plus board. Mr. Stauffer arranged regular Friday night dances, but admittance was very expensive at twenty-five cents per man – a quarter of a day's pay for Dave. Ladies were admitted free if they brought sandwiches or cake. As it happened, Dave was a musician and often played with the Dunwoody Orchestra at these dances, so he and his father would be excused the admittance fee.

Over the next few years, various local sawmill operators employed Dave and his father, often together. Cash was hard to come by in the thirties

and the men were often paid in planed lumber. Dave began to haul the lumber he and his father earned to Knotts Trading post in Sundre, where they were given ten dollars worth of grocery credit for every thousand board feet.

Dave began to attend the Olds School of Agriculture, now known as Olds College, and in 1937 he graduated. He and his dad became partners and the pair began to accept logging contracts from various operators. Two years later, Fred purchased a planer from Ted Casey and for a short while he planed for Vego Hansen, while Dave hauled the finished product to a vacant acre of land on the east side of Sundre, close to the Sundre Feed Mill, where father and son operated Sundre's first retail lumber yard, known as Burke's Lumber. That same year, 1939, the Burkes built a house across the road from this site and it is still an attractive home today. The lumber venture was short lived as the war years intervened and in 1940 Dave went off to serve King and Country. His father, unable to run the planer *and* the retail outlet without help, sold all the lumberyard stock and supplies and for the next five years concentrated on planing.



The House Built by Fred Burke in 1939 is Still Standing. *Photo courtesy of Phyllis Burke*

It was a bittersweet homecoming for Dave in 1945, for his mother, Mabel, had passed away three months earlier, on August 21st. While coming to terms with the loss of a wife and mother, the two men began to make plans for reopening the lumberyard and in 1946 this goal was achieved, with Dave planing and hauling the lumber and Fred managing the sales outlet.

In 1947 Dave married the former Phyllis Davidson, daughter of Walter and Margaret

Davidson, who were among Sundre's early business owners when they operated a butcher shop from the former Hagen House.

The Burkes' new company made its first major sale when it supplied the materials for the rebuilding of the Sundre Creamery, which had burned to the ground in 1947.

By 1949 the family business had moved to a location on the west side of the Sundre Bridge, just slightly west of where Shortstop Foods is today. The Burkes built a store here, with Bill Davidson, Phyllis's uncle, doing much of the carpentry work. They called the new business Burke's Hardware, Lumber and Building Supplies and it operated as such for about fourteen years. During that time, Dave not only worked in the store, but also did gas fitting work for his customers.



Fred & Mabel Burke with Their Son Dave in 1941. *Photo courtesy of Phyllis Burk*

Eventually, worsening arthritis became a problem for Dave and the Burkes decided to sell the store. Roy and Ruby Stewart were the new owners and they ran it as Marshall Wells Hardware. This couple still owned the store when it burned

to the ground in 1976.

After selling the business, Dave and Phyllis became the owners of Sundre Variety and Gift Store (now Sundre Men's Wear, on the northwest corner at the 4-way stop). A few years later, Dave, in his late forties, made the brave decision to return to school to earn his Grade 12 diploma. He then enrolled in the University of Alberta, in Edmonton, where he earned his Arts degree, graduating in 1971. Shortly after his graduation, he began teaching at the Olds High School, mostly in the area of industrial arts. He commuted from Sundre to Olds for thirteen years. In the meantime, in 1974, the Burkes sold the store to Jack and Pat Valens.

Dave and Phyllis Burke have five children, Corliss, Leslie, Paul, Morton and Brontie.

In 2007, the couple still reside in Sundre where they enjoy the familiar companionship of friends they have made over the course of a lifetime together. Dave, ninety years old in 2007, has been a resident of the long-term care facility at the Sundre Hospital for many years as the result of a brain aneurysm in 1989. The couple feel very lucky to have enjoyed six years of travelling in their motor home prior to Dave becoming disabled.

Fred Burke passed away in February 1985. Just short of his ninety-ninth birthday, he was witness

to almost a century of growth and change in the West, much of it right here in the Sundre area.



Dave Burke in Uniform 1943.

Photo courtesy of Phyllis Burke



Phyllis Davidson in 1946.

Photo courtesy of Phyllis Burke



Burke's Hardware in 1956.

Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum



Dave Burke and Phyllis Davidson were Married in 1947. *Photo courtesy of Phyllis Burke*



Fire Destroys the Former Burke's Hardware Store in 1976. *Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum*



Fire Destroys the Former Burke's Hardware Store in 1976. *Photo courtesy of Gary Vooy's*

A Time of Loss

World War Two

In 1939, Sundre was still a small hamlet but after WWII broke out, the population increased quite substantially. Sundre began to thrive during the 1940s due to the growth of local business and industry. But the war also brought tragedy to the community and its surrounding areas: News of loved ones lost in action arrived all too frequently and the district pulled together, supporting the bereaved families and sharing in the sense of shock and grief that each loss brought.

There were other, more bearable, hardships and many stories originate from the innovative ways in which people faced the various challenges. Food rationing was introduced in Canada in January 1942 and sugar became a precious commodity as it was used in the manufacturing of shells and bombs. Consequently, it was the first item to be rationed. Each person in a household was allowed twelve ounces of sugar a week and this was later reduced to eight ounces. Tea and coffee were also rationed due to the difficulties of importing them after many merchant ships were commandeered by the military. Other ships used for transporting food were often attacked and sunk by enemy submarines. Butter, meat and table syrups were quickly added to the rationing list. Canned goods were next to be affected because the war effort required most of the available supplies of tin. Ration books containing coupons were issued to families all across Canada, following the example of Britain and her other allies. Many people chose to "save up" their allotted supplies, so that they could celebrate special occasions without feeling deprived.

During the war years, newlyweds Jack and Lillian McGonigal were working on the Bar 7S Ranch, now known as Red Deer River Ranches. Colonel Snyder owned it at that time. Jack was a ranch hand and Lillian worked as a cook, first in the main house and then later for the men in the camp. She recalled that during the week the men would start to get irritable and argumentative and sometimes fights would break out. The men out at the camp were cut off from the local community. To help compensate for this, dances were held on a regular basis in camp. There were snacks and tea and coffee available at these affairs, but there

were never any sweet treats, such as cakes, because of the sugar rationing. Lillian suggested to the crew that if they donated part of their sugar allocations to her she would save them up and then bake some cakes for the dances. The men agreed and, along with Lillian, began doing without sugar in their tea and coffee. From then on, the dances were complete with dessert and it always seemed to Lillian that the men were in a much better frame of mind when they returned to work!

The Sundre Sports Club was initiated during the Second World War, with Bessie Ellithorpe serving as secretary. The club organized dances and other events, the proceeds from which were used to purchase cigarettes to send to local servicemen overseas.

Despite the many restrictions imposed at the time, the war years meant the beginning of a new kind of freedom for women throughout the western world: Their efforts were very much needed to help make up for the shortage of male labour that occurred when so many men went off to war. For the first time, women across the country began to join the workforce in large numbers and many of them learned skills traditionally reserved for men. "Riveter Rosie" became an affectionate nickname for women involved in previously male dominated trades, such as welding and machining. Besides the employment aspect, the liberation of women during the war years was taking place on other fronts too, and it was happening right here in Sundre. It was in the 1940's that Rose Ellithorpe, a five-foot dynamo who loved the outdoors and all kinds of sports, first tried her hand at pool. The local Pool Hall, previously the exclusive domain of the male residents of the hamlet, was doing a slow trade after the men folk went off to war – but not for long. Rose, and several other young women from the area, decided it was time they learned to play. Soldier boyfriends and husbands were in for quite a surprise when they returned home, for some of these ladies became very proficient at the sport. Rose grew to love the game so much that in later years, she had a pool table installed in the basement of the home she shared with husband, Everett Vennard.

The end of the war with Germany was declared on May 8, 1945, and while it would be three more months before victory was declared over Japan, the balance of Europe and its allies were celebrating the occasion with great enthusiasm. Street parties and parades took place in thousands of vil-

lages, towns and cities across the globe, as peace and hope began to take the place of conflict and loss, and as beloved sons, daughters, husbands, fathers and siblings began to return from battle.

Sundre rejoiced as heartily as any other community. A giant celebration drew residents from miles around and a parade was held. The parade paused in front of the Sundre Creamery, owned by Reg Morris, where United Church lay-preacher J.R. Jackson conducted an open-air service of thanksgiving from the flatbed of a big truck. The war was over; the community was growing and changing; the future looked bright.

"Men and women joined as one voice in praise and thanksgiving that the war in Europe, with all its heartaches and lasting sorrows, had finally ended in victory. Other events were held during the day-long celebrations and all of the people returned to their homes, their hearts brimming with joy that most of our young men and women would return safely."

- Muriel Eskrick, *A Journey in Faith*, 1986.

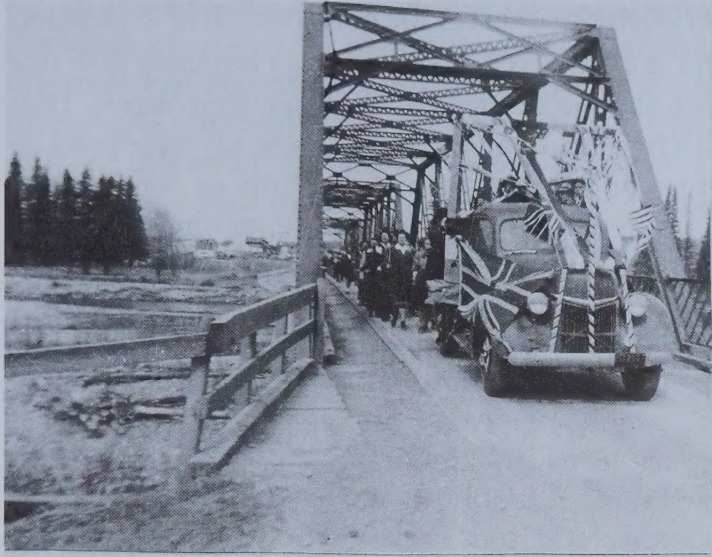
The Sundre Legion Roll of Honour at the cenotaph lists those area residents who died in WWII:

- A.H. Allison
- R.F. Bird
- N.A. Golden
- J.W. Good
- M.J. Hewitt
- H.D. McIntyre
- C.C. Stovel
- E. Wigham
- J.E. Williams



J.R. Jackson Leads a V.E. Day Service in 1945.

Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum



V - E DAY MAY 7, 1945

A Parade Celebrating the End of War Heads East Over the Sundre Bridge.

Photo courtesy of Phyllis Burke



The John Macleod/Hagen Store Decorated with Bunting for V.E. Day 1945.

Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum

Sixty-eight Years and Counting

The Birth of Sundre Motors

Although well remembered by many of Sundre's old-timers, Pearce's Garage was not Sundre's first official garage. Prior to the business being purchased by Hugh and Stanley Pearce in 1934, it was known as Sundre Garage and operated by Chris Sheets. It is possible that before this, it was the garage N.T. Hagen started when he hired Charlie Hodges as his personal mechanic. The building was located in the area just west of where

Sundre Men's Wear is situated today and was owned by Tilford Hagen, the son of N.T. Hagen.

Hugh, who was born in England in 1903, four years before the family decided to move to Canada, and his younger brother, Stanley, ran the garage for a short time together and it was very profitable for them. They worked very long hours; from 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. each business day but eventually, in 1936, Stanley found this too much and sold his shares to Hugh. Hugh found it impossible to run the business alone and so he hired a man who had been travelling around the area doing work for local farmers with his large arc welder. Hugh took a course in acetylene welding and the two men were soon very busy. With the increased business, Hugh saw a need for further services. He purchased a fifty-four inch lathe and took a course in its operation. Several local sawmills took advantage of the expanded services and the business continued to grow.



The Garage Run by Chris Sheets and then Pearce Brothers. Photo courtesy of Phyllis Burke

Tilford Hagen was keen on providing electric light in the hamlet of Sundre and made a deal with Hugh to operate a 7-horse power Diesel light plant from the garage. Unfortunately, although light was available for only a few of the community's fifty or so residents, it was too much for the plant and eventually it failed. Hugh put out a great deal of money to get it up and running again. He and his landlord had a disagreement about who was responsible for this expense, but eventually Mr. Hagen agreed to pay the bill. However, a short time later the lease on the building was due to run out and Hugh was not given the option to renew it. As things stood at that time, within thirty days, he would be out of business and, because a residence

was part of the deal, without a home too. Hugh fought this and hired a lawyer. When the case went to court, the judge awarded him a twelve-month extension on his lease. By all accounts, Mr. Hagen was not pleased about this.

Knowing he would have to find somewhere else to locate the business within the year, Hugh purchased a property across the street, where the Sundre Hotel is located today. It was one of the few places in town not owned by Mr. Hagen. The building on the site, formerly a Chinese restaurant, was torn down and Hugh went to work building his shop with lumber he had been given in payment for welding services. Unfortunately, he was to discover that due to the wartime measures in force, no new licenses were being issued for the installation of gasoline pumps. This created a big problem for Mr. Pearce as gas sales were very important to his business. Mr. Hagen told him he could continue leasing the old shop, but at double the previous rent. At about the same time, the welder who had worked with Hugh over the years bought his own business and moved away. This run of bad luck left Hugh in a difficult position, and in the meantime his bills were accumulating. In order to appease his creditors he sold the property with the new building on it to Jack Morgan. Hugh believed the new owner got a bargain on the property but was happy to be paid in cash and to be able to pay off all his debts. Jack used the building for storage for a while and then hired a gentleman by the name of Mart Romyn to build a little coffee shop on the corner of it, which soon came under the management of Aunt Jean and Uncle Alf Mjolsness, and which eventually led to the construction of Sundre's first hotel.

In the meantime, in 1941, Jack Morgan bought the old garage, where Hugh had started, out from Tilford Hagen and hired his cousin, Trevor Morgan, to work as a mechanic. A year later, Trevor became a partner in the company. These two were the founding fathers of Sundre Motors. Times were difficult at first because of wartime rationing of tires and gasoline but when the war came to an end in 1945, things began to improve. Dave Davidson was the other employee at the garage and, on returning from the war, returned to his position with Sundre Motors. While serving in the armed forces he had become proficient in welding and this enabled the company to add this service to those already offered. For several years there was a

very brisk market for the construction of log loaders and gravel boxes, and just about anything else that required the services of a welder. Bert Weins, Hale Gochee and Jack Lewis were all involved in providing this service at one time or another.

Trevor Morgan had a close call in 1946 when working under a car: The hoist failed and the vehicle fell on top of him. The quick thinking and actions of Louis Lund and Walt Lowry, who applied the air hose to the hoist, likely saved Trevor's life that day. He was badly injured and spent five months in a full body cast, but eventually was able to return to work. By that same year, two additions had been built onto the original garage, but with business expanding, it was deemed necessary to further expand the facilities. Construction began on a new building across the road to the east and it was completed in 1947. Additions were added over the years and the original building is still part of the Sundre Motors complex.

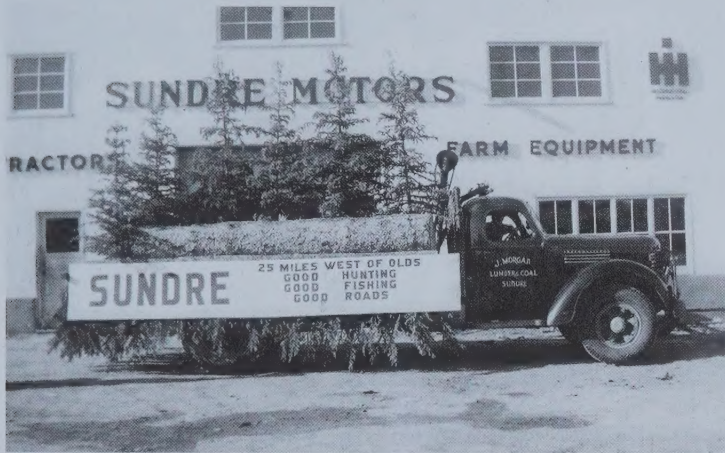


Sundre Motors in the Early Years.
Photo Courtesy of the Sundre Museum



Sundre Motors in the Early Years.
Photo Courtesy of Mary Lund

At the time the new building was completed, the Morgans were able to acquire a franchise from International Harvester Company. It was the first machinery outlet in the district and it didn't take long for this enterprise to show signs of becoming a very successful operation. Sundre Motors sold its first brand new ¾ ton International truck to Gerald Murphy for \$1,400.00. W6 tractors at that time sold for around \$2,500.00.



Sundre Motors Promotes the Community, Possibly During the Annual Rodeo Parade.

Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum

In 1952, Jack and Trevor bought a service station at the corner of the Bergen Road. They established a General Motors dealership from the premises in 1954 and "Corner Service" did very well.



Corner Service on the Corner of the Bergen Road

Eventually, Sundre Motors and Corner Service merged, becoming Sundre Motors Ltd., and the International Harvester franchise was phased out. A new showroom for the GM dealership was built on the downtown site and Corner Service was sold. Several businesses operate from that corner today.

By the time Corner Service was sold, Trevor's son, Ed, had joined the company, allowing his father to gradually work his way towards retirement. In 1972, Ed took over as manager of the company.

Jack Morgan celebrated his ninety-seventh

birthday in 2008. Trevor Morgan, with whom Jack had shared so many successful years with Sundre Motors, passed away on March 31, 2007, at the age of ninety-five, leaving Jack the only surviving member of that generation of the Morgan family tree.



Trevor Morgan Presents 10 - 30 Year Service Awards to his Employees, probably 1970s.

Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum & Gary Vooy's



Sundre Motors/GM Dealership Showroom in 2007

From Rural School House to Ultra Modern Complex

The Story of Sundre's Schools

At a time when children still attended rural one-room schoolhouses and the main mode of transportation to and from these facilities was still on horseback or on foot, John Macleod came to Sundre after purchasing the Hagen Store. He proved to be an astute businessman and also a dedicated member of the community. As the years passed and the little hamlet grew, local children still had to travel to outlying schools for their education, many of them attending at either McDougal Flats or Eagle Point. John held a strong desire to bring a school into Sundre so that students would no longer need to go out of town. He petitioned the school board to this effect on several occasions, only to be frustrated by their lack of action. Shortly after the Eagle Point School closed its doors in 1942, John decided it might be a good idea to move it into Sundre from its location three miles north of the hamlet. With this in mind, he took things into his own hands and, with the cooperation and help of many local residents, had the school moved into town by Sundre Contracting Company.

Soon after the move was complete, local people pitched in to get the schoolhouse set up and ready for its first students in its new location. It was placed on a basement and probably heated by coal or wood.

The old Eagle Point School soon proved too small to house an increasing number of students.

A second rural schoolhouse was moved in, but this, the old Rockwood School, didn't meet the need either. The United Church was built in 1945, and to help ease the overflow situation, for three years it was used on weekdays as an extension of the school.



Sundre High School Students in About 1944

Names are not necessarily in order. Back Row: Jimmy Gastle, Doreen Wigham, Anne Bartholow, Edris Carlson, Allan Dougan, Mary Hendry, Frances Ross, Phyllis Davidson.

Front Row: Doris Ferguson, Doreen Corless, Anna Mae Rock, Alice Carlson, Ted Wiens, Russell Cooper, Gladys Nielsen, Doreen McCurrough, Isobel McIntyre.

Photo courtesy of Phyllis Burke.

By 1948, a new school was built and it is believed that John Mcleod probably provided at least some of the financing for this project. This was a very modern structure for its time and it had indoor plumbing and large classrooms.



Built in 1948, the New School Housed Students from All Grades.

Photo courtesy of Marjorie Marfleet-Nichol



The Eagle Point School, Moved into Sundre About 1942.

Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum & Gary Voogs

According to Phyllis Benz, it was a six-room building that accommodated all grades. There were three classrooms on each side of a single hallway.

In the basement were the principal's office and two more classrooms, which were also used once a week for Home Economics and Shop. There was a Gestetner, a rather cumbersome copier/printer machine invented at the turn of the twentieth century, in the basement, and in 1954 high school students used this to publish the school's first newspaper, "The Blaze".

With the discovery of oil near Sundre in the first half of the 1950's, Sundre's population grew considerably and, once again, the existing schools could not accommodate the escalating numbers of schoolchildren. Consequently, the local School Board was given the go-ahead by the government to build a brand new primary/ elementary school.

The Naming of the E.W. Miller School

The EW Miller School was built in 1954 and was named after Mr. Edwin Walter Miller, who was born in Ipswich, England, on June 2nd, 1887. In his native land, Edwin dreamed of becoming a teacher. Unfortunately, he did not achieve the grades in school that would enable him to pursue this goal, so he resigned himself to helping his father on the family farm instead.

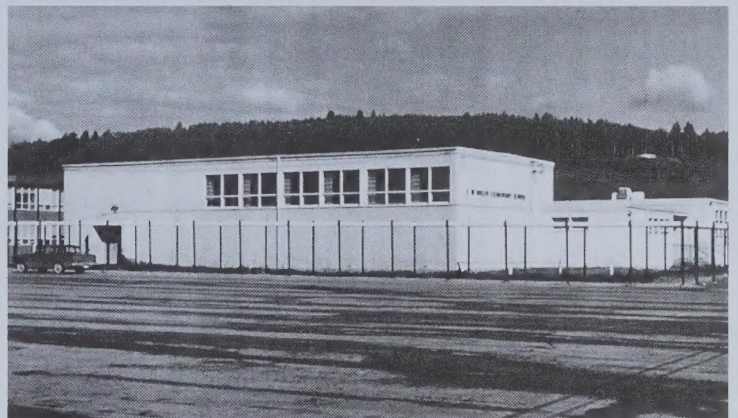
Arthur, Edwin's older brother, had come to Alberta when Edwin was young. After hearing how wonderful Canada was, Edwin, who had just turned eighteen, joined Arthur in Alberta and eventually the two filed on homesteads northwest of the tiny hamlet of Sundre.

Edwin married a lady by the name of Annie Clayton, who was also from England, and the couple produced ten children over the ensuing years, but their family was still relatively small when Edwin first became involved in local politics: About 1911 or 1912, he became the Secretary-Treasurer of the Municipality of Waterloo and he held this post for fifty years. He also served as councilor for District 4, when that municipality was merged into the County of Mountain View. He resigned at the age of seventy-five in 1963.

Ed Miller was a compassionate man and during hard times he did whatever he could to help out those whose needs were great: He was always ready to drive a sick person to Olds with his high stepping driving team. He later owned one of the first cars in the district, and made many trips to Olds to transport those who needed to go to the doctor. He didn't expect to get paid and never requested it.

As a result of his service to the area in the political field and of his many years of selfless assistance given to friends and neighbours in the district, Mr. Miller was a much-respected member of his community. Consequently, the town decided it would be fitting to name the new school in his honour.

Edwin Miller never got to be a schoolteacher, but for fifty years the halls and classrooms of the E.W. Miller School echoed with the voices of generation after generation of children. Even after his death in 1973, Edwin Miller's presence lived on in the school in the photograph of him that hung on the wall.



The E.W. Miller School was demolished in 2004 to make way for a brand new facility.

Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum & Gary Vooy's

** For a more complete account of E.W. Miller's settlement in the Sundre District see "The First Twenty Years of Settlement".*



Teacher Jean Gochee's Class in the Early 1950s.

Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum

The E.W. Miller School soon began to fill up, especially with the advent of the centralization of

schools. More rural schoolhouses closed and more students were bussed into Sundre. By the late 1950's, the era of the one room schoolhouse was over, and all rural students were bussed into town.

The oil boom had resulted in a great number of new families in the area and the population of older students was increasing quite dramatically. It soon became clear that a new high school was needed. In 1959, a modern metal frame building was completed for this purpose.

Since the time schools were centralized, it has almost always been the case in Sundre that the student population has equalled or exceeded that of the town population. In 1961, student enrolment stood at

721, an increase of 86 children from the previous year, and 28 teachers were employed at the schools. Compared to many other small Alberta towns, Sundre serves an extremely large rural area and this has had an impact on many aspects of the community's essential services, especially medical services, fire protection, ambulance and policing. Recreational facilities have also been built to accommodate the extended population base and, of course, schools have been especially impacted.

The new high school was a boon to the community, but within a very short time, the need for additional classroom space once more became apparent. Portable classrooms were brought in during the mid to late 1960's in an attempt to meet this need.

By the early 1980's, after considerable renovation over the years to the existing junior/senior high school, it was deemed



Sundre High School Class in 1954.

Photo courtesy of Helen Morgan



New Junior-Senior High School Built in 1959. *Photo courtesy of Marjorie Marfeelt - Nichol*

once again that Sundre needed a new facility. A beautiful new high school was completed in 1983, west of the existing school complex. The old high school became the elementary/junior high school and the E.W. Miller School catered to primary students and Early Childhood Services (ECS).



The Old and the New Side by Side.

Photo courtesy of Gary Vooys



Sundre High School Built in 1983

Despite the construction of the large new school, portable classrooms were again required within a very short time. The old curling rink, which used to stand close to the school, and which in fact had been surveyed incorrectly originally and consequently protruded a number of feet onto school property, had been closed in 1987 after a new rink was built. The building was purchased by the School Board, which at that time operated through the County of Mountain View, and it too was utilized for a number of school activities.

In 1995, more than a decade after the new high school was built, the Sundre Community Learn-

ing Centre was established. As an outreach school, this innovative facility was created with the blessing of the Chinook's Edge School Division to cater to the needs of "at risk" students, allowing them to work at their own pace during flexible hours. With the focus on computer learning, many students who might have given up on their education, for a variety of reasons, are given the opportunity to continue their schooling while holding down part time jobs or otherwise being unable to work within the regular system.

In 2002, the Chinook's Edge School Division, which had been created when the local school board was amalgamated as a result of the more centralized system introduced in 1995, applied to the government for modernization of the E.W. Miller School. As it turned out, the expense of modernization of the school was 75% of the cost of what building a new facility would be. As a result of these findings, in 2003 Chinook's Edge School Division received approval to build a new school in Sundre. Alberta MLA Ty Lund suggested to the Town of Sundre that part of the old Junior High school could be renovated for a community resource centre. In particular, Sundre Library, Greenwood Neighbourhood Place and Sundre Play School were all badly in need of expanded facilities and the cost of building these would have been prohibitive. Mr. Lund looked into available government grants and the result was that the Town was able to go ahead with plans for a Sundre Community Centre that would cost the town a great deal less than a completely new building.

Construction of the new school began in the spring of 2004 and it was up and operating by the spring of 2005 and renamed the River Valley School. The new school facility has a focus on the environment: Students are involved in beautification projects and a compost facility exists on site. Chinook's Edge School Division is a member of the Canadian Green Building Council and their goal is to build schools with environmental sustainability in mind. The new school has a super-efficient heating and cooling system.

Chinook's Edge School Division turned over a portion of the old school facility to the Town of Sundre as planned, and after the renovations were complete the Town began renting the various sections to local organizations in 2006. The centre is now fully operational and houses the Sundre Library, Greenwood Neighbourhood Place and FCSS, and Sundre Playschool. A variety of con-

ference rooms and facilities are available for rent. Included amongst these is the original school gymnasium, which offers space for large gatherings and community events.



River Valley School, Completed in 2005

Some of Sundre's Early Principals

John Weir was Sundre's first school principal. He was born in 1912 in Langley, BC. His wife Gertrude (Gertie) was born in Beiseker, Alberta, in 1911. When the couple married on June 29, 1940, they made their home in Harmattan, where they were both teachers. However, the couple moved to Sundre when the Eagle Point School was moved into town. John became principal and Gertrude spent some time as a teacher. The couple's two children were born when John and Gertie lived in Sundre: John David (Jack) was born in Olds in 1946, and Ann Kathrine was born in 1948, also in Olds. Tragically, when Jack was only twelve years old, after the family had moved to Armstrong, British Columbia, he died as a result of injuries he sustained in a bicycle accident.

John and Gertie represent an important period in Sundre's early educational years and are both fondly remembered by many of Sundre's current residents. John's sister, Helen, has been a resident of Sundre for many years and in 2007 she reached a major milestone in her life when she celebrated her one-hundredth birthday. Her daughter, John and Gertie's niece, also named Helen, is also a well known Sundre resident.

John and Gertrude's daughter, now Ann Wombold, makes her home in Olds with her husband, Sidney.

Gertie Weir died in 1970, and John passed away in 1984.

When the Weir family moved away in 1955, due to John's extreme allergies to pine pollen, **Chris Marfleet**, who had taught at the school for four years, became principal. He would remain in this position for twenty years and he was witness to many of the changes to the schools over that period. Like Gertrude Weir, Chris's wife, Evelyn, was also a teacher at the school, teaching for all but one of the years that Chris was employed there. Because of the ongoing overcrowding at the school, there were many years when Evelyn taught in excess of forty primary students in one classroom. Despite the large class sizes, every student was important and all those she taught remember Mrs. Marfleet with affection as a gentle, caring lady.

Chris Marfleet was born in July 1915 at Marwayne, Alberta. His family actually named that community, using a combination of the Marfleet name and the name of their home in England, Waynelete. Evelyn Marfleet was born in September 1914 at Elk Point, Alberta. The couple was married on July 2, 1939. Three children were born to Chris and Evelyn: Marjorie in 1942; Fred in 1947; and Janet in 1948.

By his own admission in a 1981 newspaper article, Chris was known to be a strict principal. He took his responsibilities for his many students very seriously and was never known to be afraid of confrontation. Despite his exacting manner, Chris had

a very kind heart. Only about half the residents in the Sundre area had telephones in the 1950's and so, when a student got sick, Chris had no way of contacting the parents to let them know. Consequently, he used his own vehicle to take the children to their homes. Soon, those families *with* telephones began to demand the same service, and after considering the matter, Chris decided it was only fair they should have it!

Almost every student who had Chris as his or her principal has a story to tell about him. Many of these stories relate to how tough he was, or to funny things that happened.

According to Marjorie Marfleet-Nichol, her dad had some rather unique methods for dealing with students who behaved badly or were disruptive: He always had two sets of boxing gloves on hand, and when the need arose, the student in question would be told to put on one pair, while Chris put on the other. The two would then have a *s p a r r i n g*

match. This kind of discipline probably would not be allowed in today's schools, but perhaps Chris was ahead of his time in realizing that a build up of student energy, or anger, could be worked off quite well in this manner. Another way Chris got students to toe the line was to send them to the dreaded "rock pile". This was an old foundation, located just east of the high school that was built in 1959. Chris sent errant students to the rock pile with a pick axe, and they were expected to spend a designated amount of time breaking up the old foundation. Not only did this serve as punishment for the kids involved, it also, over time, helped clean up the site!



John & Gertrude Weir and Infant Son.

Photo courtesy of Phyllis Burke

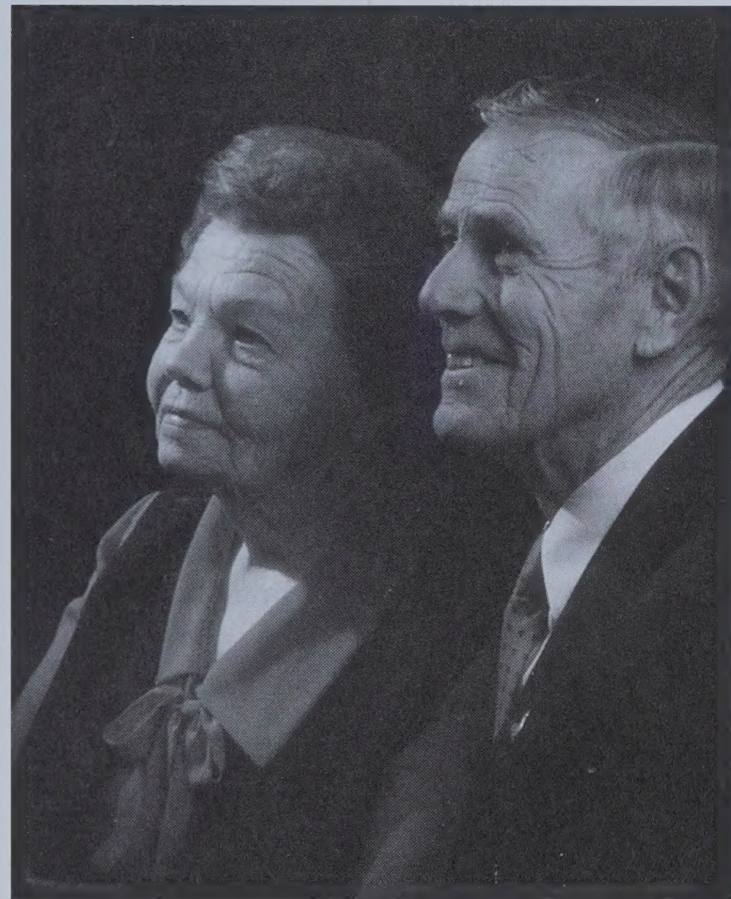


Principal Chris Marfleet in 1960. *Photo courtesy of Marjorie Marfleet-Nichol.*

Mr. Marfleet had a good sense of humour and, despite his gruffness, this was often apparent to students and parents alike. In 1981, six years after his retirement, he summed up his philosophy as a principal:

"Some people used to say that the kids ran the school; well, so they should - it's their school after all - but I made pretty darned sure they ran it the way I wanted them to!"

Chris Marfleet passed away in November 1993, and Evelyn Marfleet died in May 1997.



Chris & Evelyn Marfleet in Later Years. *Photo courtesy of Marjorie Marfleet-Nichol*

Al Dickman was the next Sundre School Principal. He was born in 1936 in Liverpool, England. His wife, Jean was also born in that city in the same year. In 1965, the couple travelled by boat to start a new life in Canada as teachers at a school in High Prairie, Alberta. However, they did not stay long, returning to England in 1967, where oldest daughter, Cathy was born that same year. By 1968, the Dickmans realized they were not able to settle back in the UK, so once more they packed their bags and travelled across the Atlantic Ocean, heading again for High Prairie. A short time later that

year, the Dickmans' only son, Jerry, was born. In 1972, the family was on the move again, this time to a teaching job for Al in Olds. Youngest daughter, Liz, was born the same year. In 1973, an opportunity arose to teach in Carstairs; the family made their home in Didsbury at this time, as it was central for all the county schools.

Their next move was to Sundre, where Al took the principal's position. Like most of his predecessors, Al was also an authoritarian principal, but he was liked and respected by students and parents alike. Sadly, Mr. Dickman died in a motorcycle accident only three years later.

Jean Dickman, who with fellow teacher, Pat Valens, developed an award winning music program at the school, continued to teach in Sundre until her retirement in 1993. She continues to make her home in Sundre.

Following the death of Mr. Dickman, **Henry Huber** was appointed to the position, but he was not a good fit for the community, and left in 1980.

Myron Thompson, who had been a teacher and guidance counsellor at the Sundre School since 1968, was Mayor of Sundre when the principal's position became vacant following Mr. Huber's departure. He and his wife, Dorothy, had moved to Sundre from the USA with their month-old baby, Myron D., the first of their two sons. Second son, Dennis, was born in 1973. Like Chris Marfleet, Myron was known as a strict principal but, also like Chris, one with a gentle heart. He had to give up his position as mayor to accept the principal's job, but in 1991, after a very successful teaching career and having seen many changes take place in education and in the Sundre schools, he tendered his resignation to enter the world of federal politics.

Myron and Dot continue to enjoy their home in Sundre and the many friends they have made here. Their story can be read elsewhere in this manuscript.

Several principals have come and gone in the past eighteen years. **Terry Pearson** took over Myron Thompson's position, and today each school has its own principal.

In 2007, **Daryl Brown** is principal of the High School and the Learning Centre, while **Rob MacLean** is principal at River Valley School.

Jim Gibbons, a Sundre area resident who taught in Sundre for many years, is superintendent of Chinook's Edge Regional Division #73.

One Starfish at a Time

Helen Morgan and the Sundre Thrift Shop

Helen and Trevor Morgan came to Sundre in 1942 after serving as missionaries for eight years in Alberta and BC. Although both had grown up in the area, it wasn't until Trevor's cousin, Jack Morgan, opened a garage and hired Trevor as a mechanic that they moved into town. It didn't take the couple long to realize that some local residents were living in extreme poverty and, with welfare services being almost non-existent at that time, very few of these people were getting the help they needed in order to provide for their families.

Several Metis families – those of mixed North American Indian and European bloodlines - lived and worked in the Sundre area. Some of these families were transient, moving from place to place in search of work and a great many of them were very poor. The Metis, known for more than two hundred and fifty years as Canada's "forgotten people", struggled continually against discrimination and indifference. Not until the establishment of the Constitution Act of 1982 was full recognition given to the Metis as members of Canada's aboriginal people, thus guaranteeing and protecting their rights. In the 1940's, Metis families in the Sundre area simply did the best they could and often this was not enough to keep them from a life of poverty. Major oil and gas deposits were yet to be discovered around Sundre and casual logging work for the lumber industry was the main source of income for many Metis and other families.

Helen often visited the Metis families in their homes and saw first hand the desperate conditions some of them endured. The seasonal lack of work was one problem, but she noticed that in some cases it was compounded by heavy alcohol use. She felt compassion for these families and was especially concerned about the women and children. Some people didn't even have homes to live in, and Helen recalls how she became aware of a group of people sleeping in a primitive little shack, close to where the Burger Baron and Pizza is today on Main Avenue West. The shack sat on the edge of what was then an outdoor skating rink and it was used in the wintertime for donning skates or taking shelter when hands and feet and noses became too cold.

Perhaps it was the discovery of these people,

homeless and huddled together for warmth, which, in part, prompted Helen to begin the project that would eventually lead to the establishment of the Sundre Thrift Shop.

Helen's faith in God was a pivotal influence in her life and, although she was not a healthy woman, this empowered her in helping those less fortunate than herself. As she spoke with people about her concerns for the impoverished families she encountered, some of them began donating boxes of used clothing and other items, which Helen stored in the basement of her home. The car garage became the distribution centre - the place where people dropped off donations and where others came to request whatever items of clothing their family might need. It didn't take long for people to understand that Mrs. Morgan was the person to contact if you were in desperate need or knew of someone in dire circumstances.

As the months and years passed, the Morgans' basement began to fill with donated articles, until it became a full time job keeping it organized. The boxes of clothes in Helen's basement were often so numerous they were piled almost to the ceiling.

By the early 1960's, when Sundre's population stood at around seven hundred, Helen began to find the physical effort of sorting and storing to be a real hardship. She was severely asthmatic and the hard work, combined with the assortment of allergens that might be present in the various piles of clothing often triggered an attack. She had dedicated twenty years to helping the less fortunate in her community, but as the town's population continued to grow, so did the donations of clothing and other items. Not only was the Morgan residence bursting at the seams, but Helen was very close to collapsing under the strain of it all too. She needed help.

A Town Betterment Meeting was being held in Olds and Helen attended this with Annette Rose, along with Mrs. Koenig and Mrs. Mikal. On the way home, Helen shared her concerns about her overflowing basement and her increasing inability to keep on top of all the work. The three women offered to help Helen in any way they could if she could come up with a building from which to distribute the clothing. Thus began a new chapter in Helen's life and the beginning of a program that would stretch across the decades to become one of Sundre's most successful non-profit enterprises.

The first "Thrift Shop" was an old condemned house that the women were permitted to use rent-free. It was in a terrible state of repair and required a great deal of cleaning and fixing up. Helen recruited volunteers to help with setting things up: The minister of the Nazarene Church donated some materials and he set to work building shelves and tables for the store; Ron Bredin, from the welding shop, constructed racks to hold some of the articles of clothing. Other community members also contributed and eventually the little house was ready to open its doors to the public on Friday and Saturday afternoons. The ladies started charging a small amount for the items people picked out in order to help cover expenses.

Eventually, the old building took more work to maintain than either the volunteers or the shop's bank balance could handle. Arrangements were completed to take over the old abandoned Tire Shop building. Local organizations were now contributing volunteer hours to the Thrift Shop and receiving small donations to their causes in return. Unfortunately, time would reveal that this building cost an awful lot of money to heat and income from sales was barely enough to cover the expense, let alone fund the donations. Still, the volunteers struggled along as best they could until Helen received word one weekend that they would have to vacate the premises within two days to make way for a paying renter. The basement of the Elks Hall was used for temporary storage of the huge amount of clothing and accessories. "Temporary" storage stretched into a prolonged period of time as Helen and other Thrift Shop volunteers scrambled to find a permanent home for the store.

By 1968, Sundre's new hospital had opened its doors and was greatly in need of medical equipment and supplies. The funding generated by the Hospital Auxiliary, established in 1967, would, over the years, result in a steady succession of important and innovative purchases for the facility, and the Sundre Thrift Shop would become a major contributor to that end, as it continues to be today.

In 1972 the Thrift Shop group got word of an old school house that was up for bids east of Olds. It was the Mayton-May City School, which many Sundre area residents had attended. Annette Rose, President of the Hospital Auxiliary at that time, asked the County of Mountain View for a "good price" on the old school building. The County suggested six hundred dollars and Helen, Annette and

Russ Matwychuck, agreed this was acceptable. The Sundre Hospital Board made it possible to buy this building by advancing the money.

Once the purchase was complete, plans were set in motion for moving the old school to Sundre. This proved to be a prolonged and costly affair. It was months before the building was moved and people became discouraged, which resulted in the collapse of the committee that had been set up to oversee the work. Despite this, there was great excitement on the day the Thrift Shop building was transported across the Red Deer River Bridge and into town.

Town Council had agreed to donate a piece of land on part of what is now the museum site. The Town also put in a four-foot foundation but Trevor Morgan pointed out that the space for the new Thrift Shop could be doubled if a full basement were constructed. This was achieved at a cost of two thousand dollars but the additional construction delayed the project until the early spring of the following year.

A new furnace was ordered through Sundre Motors. Trevor Morgan, who was an electrician and also manager of Sundre Motors, Russ Matwychuck, a local school teacher, and Bert Caveny, manager of Calgary Power in Sundre at that time, set about re-wiring parts of the old building with the help of several other volunteers. The floor was poured in the basement and Jim Miller spent many hours constructing the wooden bins which would hold the clothing and other items.

The clothes that had been stored in the Elks Hall basement for such a long time were brought over to the new facility, where it was discovered that most of them were soaking wet and mildewed. For every step forward it seemed were several steps back, but eventually things came together.

A year after the new Thrift Shop opened its doors, support came once again from the Sundre Hospital Board. Rod Macleod was Chairman at this time and it was through his prompting that the board once more agreed to assist with financing, for the Thrift Shop had incurred a debt of over \$5,000.00. In return, the Thrift Shop would continue to raise money for Hospital Auxiliary projects.

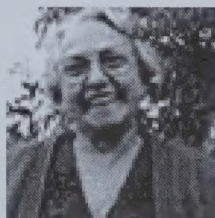
The loan the board extended was enough to pay off all outstanding debts and it enabled the Thrift Shop group to start planning their expansion into the upstairs area of the building.

Once again, the number of tasks the group faced was daunting and Helen wondered how she would ever get enough volunteers together to complete them all, but slowly and surely things started to take shape: Two sets of stairs were a priority and George Leussink assembled these; a carpenter was hired to build a porch; Russ Matwychuck arrived with a small army of high school students and they cleaned up and fixed up and installed ceiling tile. Russ was given the antique piano that had been found in the old building in recognition of the many hours he and his crew donated to the project. A painting bee was organized and a number of volunteers, including Reverend McLaren from the Nazarene Church, showed up to transform the interior of the building. The new extended facility began to take shape, but the work was still far from over.

In time, the lovely old maple floors were thoroughly cleaned and varnished; panelling was added to the walls; Ron Bredin from the Welding Shop constructed more hanging racks. For a very nominal fee, George Pusey, who was owner of the Sundre Theatre at that time, redid the exterior walls of the Thrift Shop in the same black and white Tudor theme he had used on his own building. Ed Halvorson shingled the roof of the porch addition and repaired the roof on the old section. He also insulated the attic. There were many other individuals and groups who donated time and effort and some of these same people are still actively involved with the facility today.

In 1985, the operation of the Sundre Thrift Shop left Helen's hands when she turned it over to the Hospital Auxiliary. The group still manages the facility today with the ongoing help of many district and community organizations.

Helen Morgan passed away in 1999, and while it is true that the success of the Thrift Shop is in large part due to the dedicated help of the community, it was in Helen's early charitable work, back in the forties, that the seeds were planted that opened the door to that success. Hundreds of thousands of dollars have been raised for the hospital as a result of the operation of the Sundre Thrift Shop – a fitting legacy for the lady who started it all.



Helen Morgan

**Note:*

At one time the Thrift Shop was housed in the little yellow house, which still stands behind what is now V & S Options, and also in a small log building, close to the Red Deer River, where Dorothy White and Dot Johnston would later operate a curio and antique store called D&D Antiques. Also, for a time, the Thrift Shop's home was in the old W.I. building, located just north of the Catholic Church.



Sundre Thrift Shop 2007

The Starfish

Once upon a time there was a wise man who used to go to the ocean to do his journal writing.

He had a habit of walking on the beach before he began his work.

One day he was walking along the shore.

As he looked down the beach, he saw a human figure moving like a dancer.

He smiled to himself to think of someone who would dance to the day.

So he began to walk faster to catch up.

As he got closer, he saw that it was a young man and the young man wasn't dancing, but instead he was reaching down to the shore, picking up something and very gently throwing it into the ocean.

As he got closer he called out, "Good morning!

What are you doing?"

The young man paused, looked up and replied, "Throwing starfish in the ocean."

"I guess I should have asked, why are you throwing starfish in the ocean?"

"The sun is up, and the tide is going out. And if I don't throw them in they'll die."

"But, young man, don't you realize that there are miles and miles of beach, and starfish all along it. You can't possibly make a difference!"

The young man listened politely. Then bent down, picked up another starfish and threw it into the sea, past the breaking waves and said, "It made a difference for that one."

Author Unknown

Let There Be Light

Electricity Brings Sundre into the Modern Age

There were between fifty to seventy people living within the hamlet of Sundre in the mid-to-late 1930's, many of them connected to one or another of the scattering of businesses that served the surrounding communities. Among these businesses was Pearce's Garage, owned by Hugh Pearce and operating from a building owned by Tilford Hagen, the son of Sundre's founder, Nils Hagen and his wife, Elizabeth. The building was located where V & G Store later operated and where Sundre Men's Wear is today.

Tilford decided he wanted to provide electric light to a few local houses and the ideal place to install the generator was at Pearce's Garage. Hugh agreed to be responsible for maintenance of the equipment and, at first, the 7 h.p. Diesel generator did the job quite well. But as time passed, and Tilford added more and more lights to the line, it began to break down on a regular basis. Eventually, it became so overloaded it needed a major overhaul to get it working again and Hugh spent a considerable amount of money buying replacement parts for it. Tilford was not happy when he was presented with the bill for the repairs and although he did cover these costs, the matter caused a rift between landlord and tenant that ultimately led to Hugh moving out.

Jack Morgan bought out Pearce's Garage in

1941, installing his cousin, Trevor Morgan, as mechanic, and a year later forming a partnership with him. This was the birth of Sundre Motors.

Trevor Morgan's father, Edwin, who came to Alberta in 1904 and settled in the Harmatten area, had trained as an electrical engineer in England. Over the years following Trevor's birth, in 1912, Edwin taught his son a great deal about the trade, and this knowledge eventually enabled Trevor to pass the provincial electricians exam. His skills would prove extremely fortuitous to the little community of Sundre when residents formed the Sundre Power Cooperative Association in 1943. The Co-op was a non-profit organization and its membership included several of Sundre's early entrepreneurs: Nate Ellithorpe, Reg Morris and Walt Davidson, along with other enthusiastic volunteers, worked hard to raise the money required to bring a reliable source of electricity to the district. Shares in the Co-op were sold and loans were arranged through various sources. The group purchased a used Petters diesel generator and other pre-owned equipment and were able to generate power at 550 volts, enough to provide light and the running of small motors for homes and businesses on both sides of the Red Deer River. The diesel generator was housed in the Sundre Motors building, with Trevor Morgan continuing to supply expertise to keep the community "powered up".

The old Petters diesel was a cantankerous and demanding machine and required twenty-four hour maintenance. For obvious reasons, Trevor was not able to devote this much time to the project, so the machine was shut down at 11:00 p.m. every night and restarted in the morning. Starting the generator was a work of art in itself and required the use of two blowtorches and a tank full of compressed air. Once up and running, the engine needed to be lubricated every four hours. To shut the equipment down at night without having to go to the garage, Trevor devised an ingeniously simple device: An alarm clock was rigged to a short plank on the throttle lever and when the alarm went off at 11:00 p.m. the motor shut down! Every week on Wednesday afternoons the generator was shut down for weekly maintenance procedures. Consequently, Wednesday was early closing day for Sundre businesses.

An electrical business was started from the garage and Trevor and a few other men, including Henry Kallis and Reg Morris, wired several of the

older buildings in Sundre. Eventually, Henry Kallis, purchased the electrical business from Sundre Motors and ran it with his son, Ed.

In 1946, with the hardships and shortages of the war years starting to ease, the Sundre Power Cooperative was able to purchase new engines and the Sundre power plant began twenty-four hour operation. Trevor Morgan suffered an unfortunate accident on Christmas Eve of that year when, on checking the power plant, he sustained a serious electrical shock resulting from a short circuit on the radio noise suppressor. His hand was pulled into the revolving armature, severing the tendons of a finger. Fortunately, a Doctor Harvey was able to repair the damage and the injured finger was returned to full function.

By 1951, one hundred and ten Sundre residences and businesses were subscribers to the local power grid and the Co-op was able to sell the system to Calgary Power, which remained the hydro supplier to the community for many years.

Henry Kallis eventually sold out his electrical business and Ed started his own company, Kallis Contracting, which is still operating in Sundre today. Henry Kallis passed away in 1994. Trevor Morgan died in 2007.

In the mid 1990's, the Klein Provincial Government began de-regulation of the home energy industry. Fortis Alberta is now responsible for the generation and distribution of electricity for Sundre. The generating capacity of this energy giant is far removed from that of Tilford Hagen's little 7-horsepower motor in Pearce's Garage, back in the thirties, and the temperamental Petters engine maintained by Trevor Morgan well into the forties. But the echoes of Sundre's past are not yet distant echoes, and there are many who still remember the put-put of those early generators and the days when all the lights went out simultaneously at bedtime.

Church First Operated in Eidswold District

Sundre Gospel Centre

Pentecostal Holiness Church, better known amongst Sundre and area residents as the Sundre Gospel Centre, has its roots of origin in the USA. The religious organization began operation in the

Sundre district in 1945 when Olaf and Ruby Haug led a congregation in the Eidswold district. When this couple left the area, C.J. Smalley and Sulveig Clark replaced their ministry here.

In 1954, A.W. Moore built a little church on the east side of the Sundre Bridge, close to where Sundre Tire is located today. Walter and Lilian Gamble, who came to Sundre with their three children, ministered to the needs of the community in this church until 1960, when they moved to Poplar Valley.

Emma Reid was minister for a short while, and then the Haugs, with small son, Rick, returned to Sundre and led the ministry. In 1968 Walter and Edna Strohmeier from BC took over the church until, in 1974, Ray and Dawn Kroker took over their duties.

During the Krokers' ministerial period, a new church was built at 810, 1st Street N.E. and this place of worship continues to serve the community.



Sundre Gospel Centre

Pastors Andrew and Miriam Shute, from Nova Scotia, with their son, Graham, came to Sundre in 1978 and remained here for nine years. An addition was added to the church during their tenure.

In 1988, Dave and Dale Willis, from BC, replaced the Shutes. They stayed for five years before leaving for a ministry in India.

In 1993, Pastors Jeff and Dezna Kelly began their long ministry at the Sundre Gospel Centre. Jeff has a local cabinetry business, "Kitchens Plain and Fancy".

Pastor Bernie Pickersgill is the current church minister.

Sundre United Church

Community Founder Makes an Investment in Faith

Early settlers in the Canadian west, many of them originating from diversely distinct European countries, brought with them a rich variety of customs, skills and characteristics, some of which have become deeply ingrained in the fabric of modern Western Canadian society. A little more than a century ago, the Alberta we know today was still considered a wild frontier, but many of the early pioneers of our area came from villages and towns on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean that had developed thousands of years ago. Norway, the birthplace of Sundre's founder, N T. Hagen, and the ethnic home of many area families, was settled and developed ten thousand years ago. Near Sundre, Norway, the district our town is named after, is an old medieval wooden church, called a stave church, dating back to 1150 AD, but the history of the area stretches back even further.

When Norwegian and other European settlers began to trickle into the Sundre area, some of them via the USA, where many settled initially, they were pioneers in the truest sense. Most of them had grown up in comparatively modern societies – many had been educated in schools that were established in the middle ages and had regularly attended religious services in churches that had existed for many hundreds of years. Coming into this area in the late 1800's and early 1900's, when conditions were, at best, primitive, these families must at times have questioned the wisdom of their migration to the untamed wilderness of the Canadian West. There were no roads, no stores, no schools - and no local churches in which to gather and find strength in the face of the harsh reality of the new frontier. But for many people, the desire to congregate in God's name is strong and the early settlers were not easily discouraged: they began to meet in each other's homes for religious services and Bible study; they welcomed traveling ministers to their makeshift places of worship and some of them became lay-preachers, allowing services

to take place on a regular basis.

By 1938, Sundre was established as a viable community of approximately two hundred people. Its growth had been slow and the depression years had been difficult, but as the thirties began to draw to a close, things were looking brighter for Sundre and some of its residents who, along with landowners from the outlying districts, were anxious to see a church built. There had been church services, along with Bible Study and Sunday School, held in Hagen Hall for many years, with student missionaries and visiting ministers conducting the services. This temporary arrangement had worked quite well for the community but members longed to have their own dedicated church building. However, it wasn't until 1942, when Sundre founder, N.T. Hagen, returned to the community for a visit, that the dream of a church began to become a reality.

N.T. Hagen was seventy-seven years old in 1942. He was not known to be a particularly religious man, but when he looked around the hamlet he had named in 1909, he was very pleased with what he saw. He recognized the community's need for a place of worship and in consultation with his Sundre friends he began to set in motion a way to achieve this goal.

If there was going to be a church, there first had to be a congregation, so a meeting was held at the home of John Macleod, who for twelve years was one of Sundre's most dedicated contributors towards the town's growth and sustainability, while his wife, Ethel, a registered nurse, came to play a crucial role in looking after the community's medical needs. A decision was made at that meeting to contact the Reverend A.L. Elliot, the United Church Minister from Olds, for his advice. In the meantime, N.T. Hagen donated two lots of land and contributed a generous amount of money towards the building fund.

On September 29, 1942, the congregation of the Sundre United Church was formally inaugurated in the presence of Reverend Dr. Thomas Hart, one of Alberta's pioneer ministers; Reverend Fred Chapman of Bowden, and a dedicated group of local residents.

For the winter months, Reverend Elliot had agreed to hold church services on alternate Sundays at the Women's Institute Hall. During the summer, student ministers would serve the new congregation.

The congregation mushroomed between 1943 and 1944, and offers of assistance in the building of the church came from all directions.

Growth in the little hamlet had been accelerating during the 'forties and by 1945, with the Second World War drawing to an end, Sundre was experiencing a mini-boom. To the joy of the people who had worked so hard on the project, the Sundre United Church was finally under construction. It was to be a 30' x 42' structure with a full basement. A Mr. Wismer, from Westward Ho, did the excavation work, while volunteer workers contributed many hours of labour. The cement for the church foundation was poured on May 28, 1945. Mrs. Alice Ellithorpe, one of Sundre's early residents, was there to assist with feeding the work crew, but like many others in attendance that day, she also took her turn at pushing the wheelbarrow loads of heavy cement from the mixer to the forms.

By early fall of 1945, the Sundre United Church was a reality and the congregation gathered for the very first service to be held there on October 7. A month later, the community celebrated the first wedding to be held at the church; Dorothy Mae Bliss and Aubrey Walter Nelson were married on November 10, 1945.



Sundre United Church Shortly After Completion. *Photo courtesy of Mary Lund*

Some of the young men and women of Sundre who had been called into service during the war were arriving home at last. There was a sense of joy and celebration in the air as one after another returned to his or her family. But the times were bittersweet too, with the grief felt for those who had died in service to king and country and for their families. Adding to that sadness, there came

news from the USA that Sundre's founder and the main benefactor of the Sundre United Church had passed away in California on December 11, 1945. N.T. Hagen would never see the church he had helped to build in the community he had established thirty-six years earlier. Mr. Hagen was buried alongside his wife, Elizabeth, at the Mount View Cemetery in Pasadena.

The official dedication of the Sundre United Church was delayed by three years because the interior had not been completed. This was due to a severe lack of space at the Sundre School that resulted in the school renting part of the church. The income from the rent was a boon to church officials as they were already realizing some of the financial problems that would plague the church over the coming years. With a new and larger school in place by 1948, the church was no longer needed for student use and after the chancel was completed and the first communion set purchased, plans were made for the dedication to be held on September 12, 1948.

It was a very special day for the congregation and board. Bertha Hagen came up from Californiato be present, while the Reverend W.H. Moss of Olds led the service of dedication. The pulpit was dedicated in the memory of Ernest Bird, an early settler of the district and a very public minded person who had, among other duties, served as secretary treasurer for the Sundre Creamery Board when it was formed in 1919. At his death, the proceeds from Ernie's small estate had been handed over to the church building fund, so it was fitting that his memory be honoured in this way.

In May 1949, Bertha Hagen presented the church with a beautiful Hammond organ and chimes, along with a piano, in memory of her parents, N.T. and Elizabeth. Bessie Ellithorpe played the organ for the first time at a service held on May 22nd of that year.

The years passed quickly. Sundre officially became a village in 1950 and then in 1956 received its designation as a town. The oil and gas industry was changing the face of the little community. Transient workers doing oilfield work in the area underlined the need for additional accommodation and restaurant facilities; businesses responded to the growing need for expanded customer services; school enrolment increased; health and medical care requirements were growing -



Wedding Day for Louis & Mary Lund at the United Church. *Photo courtesy of Mary Lund*

and the United Church was welcoming an ever increasing number of members.

From 1945 to 1955, John Rea (J.R.) Jackson, who had been a Methodist minister and a blacksmith in Northumberland, England, served as lay minister to the church. J.R.'s son, Nichol, often assisted his father with the services and both men are fondly remembered for their dedication and hard work in service of the United Church. In 1955, J.R., by then in his late seventies, was honoured at a special service on June 24 – his final Sunday as Lay Minister – by the Red Deer Presbytery, in conjunction with the local Church Board. He was presented with a framed “illuminated” address, “A Tribute to a Man of God” by Mrs. Nita Thompson, Presbytery Chairperson. Mr. Jackson, who would become Minister Emeritus, would continue to serve the church for many years at times when the ordained minister was absent. He died in 1968 at the age of ninety-two.

The first ordained minister to serve the Sundre United Church was Reverend Terry Anderson in 1955. Terry, a young man from Edmonton, and his wife, Daphne, who was expecting their first child, were given lodging in a two-bedroom home at 105 2nd Avenue N.E. until such time as a manse could be built.

Lack of money was often at the root of most of the difficulties the church encountered and it would plague the board, off and on, for years to come. Despite this, the church was able to expand to meet the needs of the growing community and many renovations and several additions have been carried out through the decades. A Church Choir, initially formed in 1944, has continued to hold a special place in the church and in the community.

Like his father before him, Nichol Jackson served the Sundre United Church with great devotion

over the years, sometimes acting as Lay Minister, but also contributing physical labour and financial help. He was recognised for all his dedicated work in a special service in his honour on February 22, 1981. Later that year, on August 11, Nichol passed away.

In 1986, a year after the 40th Anniversary of the United Church, a large hall added to the west side of the building was nearing completion and “A Journey in Faith”, The Story of the Sundre United Church, written by Muriel Eskrick, was published.

In 2005, the Sundre United Church celebrated its 60th Anniversary. It continues to be a focal point in the lives of many members.

J.R. Jackson

John Rae Jackson, a blacksmith by trade and a local Methodist preacher in the UK, married Ann Patterson in Northumberland, England in the year 1900. They had eleven children - nine sons and two daughters, and the youngest of these, Mary, was five years old when the J.R. Jackson family left their homeland in 1926 and began a new life in the Rockwood district, near Sundre, Alberta. They purchased their land, SW $\frac{1}{4}$ -34-33-5-5, through the Soldier Settlement Board for eight dollars an acre.

By 1927, the Jacksons harvested their first crop of oats, along with a good supply of potatoes, turnips and carrots. The vegetables, as well as an abundance of wild meat allowed them to eat well. By this time, they had their first car, a 1926 Chevrolet, but it would be fourteen years before they purchased their first tractor, a Massey Harris. The Jackson boys, Nichol, in his mid teens, and his oldest brothers, did a lot of the heavy farm work, while J.R. and Ann raised sheep. Ann made many warm comforters from the fleeces.

Geoffrey and Richard Jackson joined the armed services at the outbreak of WW2 in 1939 and both served overseas. In the meantime, J.R. was traveling around the countryside conducting services as a minister. Nichol often accompanied him and when, in 1945, J.R. became the first lay minister for the new United Church in Sundre, Nichol also participated in the services and remained an active member for many years.

Ann Jackson was an active member of the Sundre W.I., joining when first coming to the area in 1926 and remaining a member until her death in 1965.

John Rae Jackson died in 1968 at the age of ninety-two years.

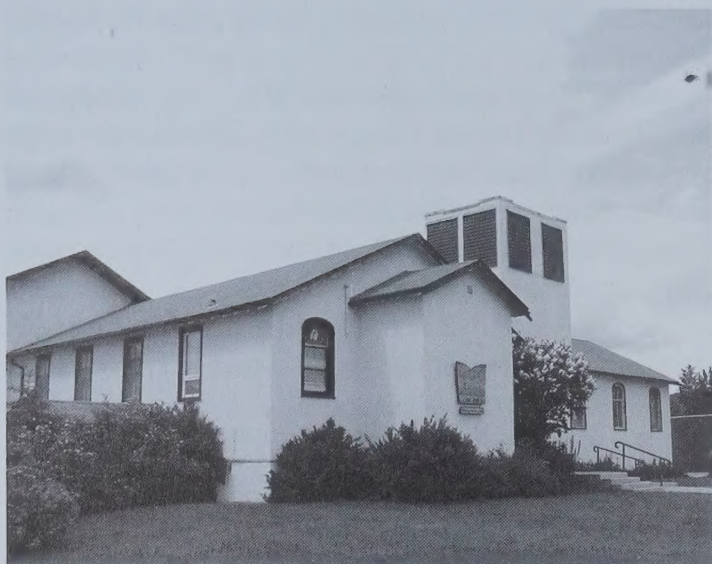
Ocean.

Between 1942 and 1948, approximately forty-six thousand war brides accompanied by a total of twenty-two thousand young children and babies arrived on Canada's shores. They reached their destinations by sea, crossing the Atlantic on huge troop ships or converted ocean liners. Prior to 1946, these epic journeys were fraught with danger: German U-boats lurked beneath the surface of the North Atlantic and the possibility of one of the troop ships taking a hit from an enemy torpedo was very real. Most women, however, waited until the war was over before undertaking the adventures that would result in new lives with the men they loved, on an unknown continent.

Pier 21 in Halifax, Nova Scotia, is now an historic site. Between 1928 and 1971 it was the point of entry into Canada for over a million immigrants, refugees and returning servicemen and women. It was at Pier 21 that the majority of Canada's war brides and their children first set foot on the soil of their new land, and where each began the second leg of their journey.

While many war brides had married men from the more settled, more sophisticated areas of eastern and central Canada and the west coast, thousands of them found themselves transported to isolated locations over seemingly endless miles of comparatively uninhabited countryside. The English brides, many of them from modern, vibrant cities, suddenly came face to face with the expanse of the sparsely populated Canadian prairies. Some war brides arrived in Canada in the early months of the year. It would have been spring in England, daffodils and crocuses would be blooming; birds would be singing; people would be preparing meals in modern homes on paved streets, taking for granted the indoor plumbing and electricity... while on the Canadian prairie the howling winter winds from the arctic blew unrestricted across the virtually treeless landscape - and the path to the outhouse was carved through a small mountain of drifted snow.

Surprisingly, having survived the initial jolt of horror at the introduction to their new homes, and having endured the isolation that prairie living often involved, most of Canada's newest citizens decided to stay. Almost without exception, their husbands' families and friends had been extremely warm and welcoming, throwing showers and generally helping them in every way possible to adjust to Canadian life. This helped ease the heart-



Sundre United Church in 2007

All For Love

Sundre War Bride Stories

When Canadian soldiers, airmen and sailors were stationed overseas during World Wars I and II, their postings usually included prolonged tours of duty from one of a number of British bases. During these deployments, the men and women of the Canadian Armed Forces were given warm welcomes by the British public and had opportunities to socialize when on weekend leave. Although the forming of permanent relationships with the opposite sex was discouraged by the military, many service personnel fell in love while on British soil and a lot of them subsequently married their English sweethearts. This was especially so during World War Two, when young English women had earned a much greater degree of freedom and independence than was previously experienced, in part because of their employment in the war effort, but also as a result of the changing attitudes of the post-Victorian era. So, while there were certainly a number of war brides in Canada following WWI, it was in the 'forties that so many young Englishwomen, and some ladies from other parts of Europe, left their homes and families for a new life across the great Atlantic

wrenching homesickness that often overcame these brave young women.

Some of Sundre's war brides started their married lives in other parts of Canada, coming to the Sundre area in subsequent years. Others came directly to the local area. It was not an easy transition from the relative comforts of home: Most roads were little more than dirt tracks, often rutted and oozing with mud; schools were one-room affairs where one teacher taught children of all ages; rural homes were mostly small and basic, heated by wood and lit by oil lamps; cooking was done on a woodstove; the outhouse – of course – was in the back yard and was a frigid place to visit when temperatures plunged to thirty below. There were cows and horses and pigs and chickens in various areas surrounding the home, this meant there were regular chores for the women of the house, as well as the men folk. Some war brides from big English cities had never seen a cow, let alone milked one! The fashionable dresses and high-heeled shoes these young brides had so carefully purchased and packed in anticipation of their new lives in Canada suddenly seemed terribly frivolous and unsuitable. It wasn't that the handsome young husbands had not explained to their new brides the differences between the cosmopolitan towns and cities of England and the rustic conditions of rural Canada – most of them had at least made an attempt – but a woman in love is often blind to the realities of life, at least until she meets them head on!

Despite the early disappointments and trials, despite the separation from loved ones in the old country and the deep sense of loneliness that often prevailed, Canada's war brides threw themselves into the adventure of their changed lives. Most adjusted admirably to their new environment, and came to love Canada and its people deeply. They began to contribute to their local area and their new homeland in many diverse and meaningful ways, cementing the bonds of family and community and taking an active and determined role in the building of the future.

In 2007, five war brides continue to live in the Sundre area: Lesley Munns, Dot Johnston, Alice Hall, Chris McKinnon, and Olive Halvorson. Two of these ladies agreed to share their stories in this book:

A NEW LIFE – *by Lesley Munns*

"My impressions of moving to Canada, and also to Sundre? Well, both events took place many years ago, but memories still remain of these big changes in my life.

In August 1945, I was married to Hugh Munns, a farmer whose home was in Saskatchewan. Having spent my entire life in London, England, and never having even seen a farm, I just had no idea of what a different world would become my home. I arrived in Regina on March 6th, 1946, but since I had no idea where I was, I just continued talking to the person sitting beside me. Then I looked up, and there was a familiar figure, despite being in civilian clothes! I jumped up, we gathered my belongings, and stepped on to the platform. What a shock awaited me! I'll never forget the cold blast of winter weather that seemed to freeze my nose – a sensation I had never experienced and which I found really hard to accept. It was just mind boggling to me. However, we made our way to the hotel room Hugh had booked for us, and I learned I was to be taken to the home of relatives, who were anxiously awaiting my arrival. Meeting this couple was a great pleasure, they were so welcoming, and eased my initiation to the new world which was to be my home.

The next day, we left by train for Craik, Saskatchewan, where we would live for the next twenty years. The trip to the farm was certainly an eye opener to me! Firstly, we stopped at the home of a good friend in Craik, where I was told to put on some borrowed finery. I had arrived in a nicely tailored suit, but I was persuaded to discard this and wear heavy pants and parka for the ten mile trip by team and sleigh to the Munns' farm. For eight months, until we bought an adjoining farm, we lived with Hugh's parents. Again, they were totally welcoming, as were all their friends and neighbours, and I was always made to feel a part of this community.

One of the earliest events took place on a Sunday not long after my arrival. Cars began to pull into the farm, and there seemed to be so many of them, I was really worried. I knew how Hugh's parents always made friends and neighbours welcome to their home by immediately putting on the coffee pot, and producing homemade goodies, but the number of visitors

on this day made me ask "Do you have to provide lunch for all these people"? Hugh's mother reassured me. "Of course not, they've brought lunch with them". And so I learned about showers, and again felt overwhelmed by the generosity and kindness of these people, all complete strangers to me!



Hugh & Lesley Munns. *Photo courtesy of Lesley Munns*

We continued living ten miles south of Craik, and we raised our family of two girls and a boy, but Hugh had never really cared for grain farming, and early in 1967 our farm was advertised for sale after an Air Force friend of Hugh's wrote and told him of a place for sale near Sundre. The farm sold, and we really liked the ranch in Sundre, but

were advised it was a place on which it would be difficult to make a living. So for four months we lived in Camrose, where Hugh would sell farm machinery. In September 1967, we moved to Sundre and spent two months living in the motel operated by Bea and Arnold Hassler. On November 1st, we moved to the ranch, which Hugh had named "19 Mile Ranch" after checking the mileage from downtown Sundre one day.

Again, we were really fortunate, because the Hasslers proved to be true friends, with whom we continue to visit whenever possible.



Lesley with Family Pet. *Photo courtesy of Lesley Munns*

Our older girl, Jackie, completed her final year at the University of Saskatchewan after marrying Jerry Krepakevich, a fellow student. On receiving their degrees, they moved to Montreal but Jackie now lives in Costa Rica. Our son completed high school the year we left Craik. For a while he worked at Headingly, Manitoba, then came to Sundre and helped his dad build the basement for our new home. He then attended Olds College, becoming an Inspector of Meat Products. Presently, he ranches at Hanna, Alberta. Jody makes her home at Spruce View, where she has lived for many years.

In the fall of 1987, after spending twenty years in our home bordering the Red Deer River west of Coal Camp, we purchased our house in northeast Sundre.

All in all, my moves to Canada and to Sundre were somewhat traumatic at the time, but all is well that ends well. Now well into our eighties, we are fortunate to be in our own home, and hopefully will continue to be here for the foreseeable future."



Hugh & Lesley Munns with Their Children & Hugh's Brother. Photo courtesy of Lesley Munns

***Note:**

Lesley Munns is a writer who, over a period of many years, has contributed a great deal to the community through her work with the Sundre Round Up and, in particular, by way of her regular column, "Spotlight on Sundre". Through this very popular feature, readers were introduced to newcomers in the community as well as to many of the "old timers", businessmen and women, and outstanding citizens. It is not at all unreasonable to suggest that "Spotlight on Sundre" was the first thing many people read when opening up their local weekly. In 1981, Lesley wrote "The Russ Greenwood Story." The book is a tribute to the animal trainer extraordinaire who made Sundre his home for nearly thirty years and whose memory is honoured in the buffalo depicted in the Town of Sundre logo and the naming of the Greenwood Park Campground and "Greenwood Country" in general.

Lesley retired her Round Up by-line some years ago but continued to serve the community and beyond in her long-standing position as Marriage Commissioner. She was into her eighties when she decided to give this up and just as her Round Up column is missed, so is the special personal touch she

brought to the marriage ceremonies of so many local people.

Much more comfortable bringing positive attention to others than she is about having it brought upon herself, Lesley has consistently and firmly resisted requests for an interview for a story about her own life. She prefers to avoid the "spot-light", choosing instead to quietly go about her business.

A LETTER HOME – by Doreen (Dot) Johnston

"Dear Mom,

Yesterday we celebrated our twenty-fifth anniversary and how I wished you and dad could have been with us, as you were on that day we were married in the old church in Northallerton.

I remember the day, a year and a half later when we said goodbye on the station platform and I started on the long journey to Canada with my baby son, and the mixed emotions I felt as the train pulled away, leaving behind my home and family. There were only other war brides and their children in the compartment I was in and they were a great support as I shed the inevitable tears of parting. Then the excitement came at the thought of seeing my husband again and starting a new life with him in his country. It was only years later, when my own children were leaving home, that I realized what it must have been like for you to say goodbye to your only child and baby grandson, not knowing when we would meet again.

The train arrived in Liverpool and we were met and escorted aboard the ship, Britannic, for the next stage of the journey. We hadn't been told this was a troop ship, taking home servicemen and nurses and a relatively small number of wives and children. It was May 14, 1945 – the war in Europe was over but we were still at war with Japan. We were given orders from the ship's Captain that the blackout would continue for the duration of the voyage as there could still be German U-boats in the Atlantic with crews who didn't know the war was over and who might attempt to torpedo us. The voyage was a nightmare: A violent storm blew up and continued for several days. Most of us were seasick. The ship had been gutted and turned into a troop transport early in the war, so three of us with our children shared three bunks in a very small cabin not far from the kitchen. With the portholes covered at dark, the cooking smells from

the kitchen and not much air circulating intensified the sickness. We were all thankful when one night the lights of Halifax harbour came into view.

The next day, immigration officials came on board to do their paperwork and then we left the ship for Pier 21 and then boarded a train for our final destinations. We had an escort on the train who looked after all the arrangements and the Canadians were very kind to us.

It was a long journey across Canada, the vastness of the country after our small island was the first indication of the huge life changes I was about to face. I felt the first doubts about being up to the challenge. Eventually, I arrived in Saskatoon, to be met by my husband, Johnny, and some of his family. Everything was okay again.

We drove to my in-laws' farm and little did I know this would be my home for the next year. It was a shock to find there was no bathroom. I was shown where the outhouse was, complete with toilet paper from the Eatons catalogue. This was just the beginning. All the comforts of my prior home were gone – no running water unless you count running to the well and pumping it; no gas stove – it was replaced with a woodstove that had to be fed armloads of wood; no electricity – irons that were heated on the stove and the only artificial light we had came from oil lamps. The worst thing was the homesickness for my family and friends, especially on Sunday afternoons when my young brothers-in-law and sister-in-law went off with their friends and my mother-in-law took a well-earned rest with her magazine. Sunday became my time to cry and cuddle with my little son.

In spite of the changes in my life, my new family were wonderful to me. I learned to cook and help around the farm. The neighbours were friendly, except for some of the daughters, who saw these new brides as women who had stolen their men and prospective husbands! Johnny was eventually discharged from the R.C.A.F. and we were finally together. After another year in a small village in Saskatchewan we decided to move to Alberta.

I will never forget that move. We had a large truck loaded with all our furniture and had two small children and a new baby. But we were young and it was an adventure. We arrived in the town of Olds and asked for directions to Sundre. It was another journey that included bad weather. It had been raining for three days and the road to Sundre was gravelled, but things would get worse: When

we got to Sundre, we found that the road to the farm we had purchased was mud, not even gravelled, and was impassable. We spent the night at the old Sundre Hotel and waited for morning. At daylight, we decided to try it. The first three miles weren't so bad because the road was gravel as far as the McDougal Flats corner. Then there was nothing but mud for the four miles to the farm. Half way up what is known as Haynes Hill we became stuck. We could hear a Cat working close by, so off went Johnny to get help. Ernie Robson was the Cat operator and he came and pulled us up the hill and we made it the rest of the way. The last half mile was a trail through the bush, between huge pine and spruce trees, and then, finally, the buildings! They were surrounded by fifteen acres of cleared land and the remainder of the quarter was trees and bush. I remember thinking that life in Saskatchewan had just been boot camp for what was to come. I developed a great respect for those pioneer families who came here before us, especially my mother-in-law for teaching me the skills I would need to make a success of this new life. The neighbours in the Sundre area were the most wonderful people anyone could hope to meet and their caring and support over the years has made a life of hard work a rewarding and satisfying experience.



Dot Johnston with Her Parents & Children at the Sundre Farm. *Photo courtesy of Dot Johnston*

Thanks for letting me take this trip down memory lane, Mom. Canada is my country now and I am proud to be one of its citizens, but you know there will always be a place in my heart for home.

Love to all,
Dot"

**Note:*

Throughout more than sixty years in the area, Dot Johnston has proved herself to be a tireless and prolific volunteer in the Sundre community. She has been involved in many organizations, including the Hospital Auxiliary, Historical Society, Further Education, Hospital Board, Royal Purple, Legion Auxiliary, Palliative Care and Nutrition for Learning. Indeed, she has been one of the leading forces behind the establishment of some of these groups. She has served as President of the Palliative Care Association twice and was Coordinator, Vice Chairman and President of the Further Education group in its early days. Dot was also among the hundreds of local women who marched on the County Offices in Didsbury in the 1960s – a united effort that turned the tide in the long struggle to bring a hospital to Sundre.

As of 2007, Johnny Johnston has belonged to the Sundre Elks Lodge for forty-five years, and served two terms as Exalted Ruler, one of those terms being in 2000, when the Elks celebrated their 50th Anniversary. In recent years he has served as Historian. He has been a member of the Sundre Legion since 1952 and, along with Dot, was also a charter member of the Sundre Historical Society.

When the couple first came to Sundre in the late 1940's, they remember the hamlet having one store, a post office, a creamery and a garage. The Johnstons have eight children: Bob, born in the UK, Elsie, born in Saskatchewan, and Kathy, Helen, Marion, Ann, Linda and Fran – all born in the Sundre area. The couple have a grand total of 16 grandchildren and 8 great-grandchildren.

Dot Johnston, a war bride from the small market town of Northallerton, Yorkshire, where her parents ran The Cosy Café, received the Sundre Citizen of the Year award in 1987 and the Governor General's Caring Canadian Award, presented by then Alberta Lieutenant Governor, Lois Hole, in 2002.

Sundre's war brides left their homes and families behind to begin new lives in a distant, and at first, alien country, with the men they loved. They represent the courage and dignity of a generation

of women who lived through some of the greatest challenges of modern history. England was at war when these girls grew into adulthood: some of them saw the horror of that war first hand, as the bombs fell on their home towns and cities and the air-raid sirens wailed through the darkness. Like many other brave young women of the 'forties, they are an inspiration and a credit to both their homeland and their adopted Canada.

Early Doctor Lived in a Tent

Dr. C.A. Miller

Doctor Chauncy Alvin Miller came to Sundre in May 1946, and his wife Eileen and two children, John and Margaret, joined him in June of the same year. Initially the family made their home in a canvas tent on the east side of the Red Deer River while they looked for a suitable home.

Chancey and Eileen met at McGill University, Quebec, and it is from this college that Chancey graduated in 1929. The couple married in Eastern Canada and came west in 1931, settling in Westlock, Alberta. In later years, Dr. Miller served as a medical officer at a POW camp at Ozada, near Canmore. After the war, they moved to Cereal, Alberta.

Having made the acquaintance of the Vennard and Sarles families from Sundre, Dr. and Mrs. Miller decided to move to this community. Dr. Miller first set up his practice in a small room at the back of Goodland's Harness Shop, but when the Millers moved into a home close to the corner of the Bergen Road and Highway 27, the doctor saw patients from there. It was a good-sized house, located on the lot now occupied by the Legion Cenotaph. At the time, Dr. Miller was the only medical doctor between Olds and Rocky Mountain house, so his services were very much appreciated by the people of the growing Sundre hamlet.

In 1947, Dr. Miller bought a car and this enabled him to make house calls and transport patients when necessary. The family eventually moved to a house in the northeast area of Sundre.

Failing eyesight eventually forced the physician to retire from medical practice after serving the Sundre Community for twenty-nine years.

Eileen Miller was one of two ladies to serve as librarian when the Sundre Library was founded in 1949. She was still a dedicated volunteer until shortly before her death in 2000 at the age of ninety-six. Dr. Miller died nine years earlier at age 86. Both are buried at the Sundre Cemetery.

In 1977, Dr. and Mrs. Miller jointly received the Sundre Citizen of the Year Award for their many years of dedicated service to the community.



Doctor & Mrs. Chauncy Miller.

Photo courtesy of Gary Vooy's

**Note: Prior to Sundre having a permanent doctor, Drs. Hartman and Mann, from Olds, traveled by horse and buggy to visit the sick in many outlying areas, including Sundre. Mass tonsillectomies were performed from time to time at Hagen Hall and at the James River Hall and parents transported their children by team and wagon to attend these day surgeries.*

The Sundre Legion and the Ladies Auxiliary

Local Veteran, Cliff MacBeth, Legion Founder

In the summer of 1946, when Sundre had a population of approximately 180, Cliff MacBeth was a returned world war veteran. Cliff, a member of the British Empire Service League while in England, decided that it would be a good idea to

form a Royal Canadian Legion Branch in Sundre. With the support of local veterans, the first official meeting was held in the MacBeth home in the fall of 1946 with forty ex-servicemen in attendance. From these, the first slate of Provisional Officers was elected. The Constitution, By-Laws, Rules and Regulations of the Canadian Legion of the British Empire Service League were adopted on January 3, 1947. Monthly meetings were held in the homes of various members, until the basement of the United Church was secured for this purpose. The Charter was mailed from Dominion Command on June 24, 1947 and the Sundre Branch #223 of the Royal Canadian Legion became a reality. The Executive Committee immediately began raising money to enable the Branch to have a home of its own.

Ralph Ellithorpe, who was a member of the branch, donated the land for the first hall. The parcel, situated on 5th Street S.E., is where the Sundre Bottle Depot is presently located. Local veterans and community volunteers completed the construction of the hall. Donations of materials came from the local hardware store and a number of sawmills in the area. Many community members donated cash and Sundre Creamery owner, Reg Morris, donated a large amount of cement, which had been salvaged from a fire at his business in 1947.

The Legion had kept all its early records at the Sundre Creamery. Consequently, when the creamery burned to the ground, everything was lost, including the original charter.

The hall was built in three different stages throughout the years. The original hall was a 25 X 40' rectangular frame building. It was very basic, with no indoor plumbing or water supply. But it was a source of pride to all those who had contributed to its completion and a real asset to the community.

In 1948, a significant change occurred for the Legion with the formation of Branch #223 of the Ladies Auxiliary. Many wives of Legion members, along with other local women, had contributed a great deal of time and hard work in supporting the formation of the Legion. They diligently raised funds for the building and contributed in numerous other ways. Now, with the passing of their own charter, they were given recognition, along with an official mandate.

By 1956, Legion branches were permitted to sell liquor, but only in the evenings and only to

Legion members. Additionally, the liquor could only be handled and sold by Legion members. Liquor laws were still extremely strict in the fifties, so this was seen as a real breakthrough. In the same year, a Memorial Cross, constructed by Colonel E. Bowman, was erected at the hall, along with the sign, "Lest We Forget", painted by Ernie Pearce.

In 1965, a group of men began the stonework for a Cenotaph, to be situated on the boulevard on Main Avenue East, across from Sundre Motors. The dedication was held on August 2, 1967. Six years later, the Cenotaph was relocated a short distance east of the boulevard to the flats near the riverbank, where Greenwood Park is located today. There it remained until 1979.



Mrs. Mary McIntyre Lays a Wreath on Behalf of The Mothers of Canada at the Cenotaph Location Down Town.

Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum

Water was installed in the Legion hall in 1967, courtesy of the fund raising efforts of the Ladies Auxiliary, which organized and ran a huge auction sale to finance the digging of a well. Indoor plumbing was a great step forward for the branch

and undoubtedly a real convenience for the Auxiliary ladies, who had been required to haul in water for any functions they hosted.

By the close of 1973, a 15 X 40' addition to the east side of the hall was in the works. This would provide a kitchen area and bar. By May, 1975, a second addition on the west side was started. This would allow for a stage, to be used for official events and for bands playing at the regular dances.

In March 1976, the Ladies Auxiliary took over the sole operation of the weekly bingo games, which have remained a major source of income for their donations to numerous worthy groups and organizations.

In 1979, the Cenotaph was moved to its present location across the Sundre Bridge at the southwest corner of the intersection of 5th Street and Main Avenue East. The two-acre lot on which it stands is known as Veteran Homecoming Park. It was officially opened on October 5, 1980 by Dick Chapelhow, President of Alberta-North West Territories Command, who planted a cherry tree to the east of the Cenotaph. The park has a very nice picnic area and is often enjoyed by local residents and visitors.



The Legion Cenotaph at its Present Location in Veteran Homecoming Park

The years passed quickly and the time arrived to build a new hall. In January 1983, enough money had been raised through concentrated

fund-raising efforts, donations and grants, to reach this goal. Two lots on the corner of 1st Avenue S.E. and 6th Street S.E. were purchased for \$27,000.00 and on June 2, 1983, Sundre Mayor, Neil Vanderzwan and Legion President, Art Smith, officiated at the sod-turning ceremonies, and construction of the new 44 x 100 foot facility began.

The last meeting in the old hall was held on October 12, 1983, with the last social event being held on October 15, 1983. Construction of the new hall was completed at a cost of \$179,000.00 in time to hold Remembrance Day ceremonies on November 11.

The branch continues to take part in poppy campaigns, conventions, rallies, community affairs, etc., while also contributing to many worthwhile projects.

Donations to charitable organizations, mostly within the community, are made on an annual basis from the proceeds of Nevada pull tickets. Since their beginnings in the mid 1940's, the Legion and Ladies Auxiliary combined have donated over a million dollars within the Sundre and area community.



The Sundre Legion Hall in 2007

Early Church Meeting and Services Held in Bakery

Sundre Church of the Nazarene Built in 1947

In 1946 there were several community members interested in forming a Nazarene Church in Sundre. Prior to this date, Sunday school classes for children of this denomination had been held

in the McDougal Flats Mennonite Brethren in Christ Church. Later, following the construction of the United Church in 1945, an agreement was reached with the United Church Board, which led to Nazarene classes being held there. When a new United Church minister took charge in 1946, he disagreed with the way the arrangement was set up and the Nazarene group felt it best to find another home for the Sunday school.

Mr. and Mrs. George Savage were Nazarenes from Rimbey. They built the first bakery in Sundre in 1946, with living space above. At the invitation of Mr. and Mrs. Savage, interested residents attended a meeting at the bakery on October 20th, 1946, to meet with Reverend and Mrs. Edward Lawlor, District Superintendent of the Canada West District, his brother Dave Lawlor and Dr. W.N. King from the Canadian Nazarene College in Red Deer. Thirty-six people attended the afternoon meeting and they unanimously requested that Reverend Lawlor proceed to organize a church for Sundre and to appoint Dr. King as pastor.

On October 27th, Dr. King officiated over the first service of this new pastorate and plans were made to start holding services in Hagen Hall, beginning in January 1947. By the time January arrived, Hagen Hall had been condemned for public use. The United Church once again offered their assistance and meetings and services were held there. Twenty-five Nazarene members were received into the church by February 23rd, 1947, and the first annual meeting of the church was held March 15th. At this meeting, members agreed to purchase a property from Mr. Thor Walle for four hundred dollars. On this land they would build their church.

The church secured a building loan of eight hundred dollars and on June 16th, construction began. By July 19th, with only the shell of the building completed, two hundred people packed the little church for a special service, attended by Reverend and Mrs. Warren Rogers. A regular church service was held there the next day.

The windows and doors were installed in the church in mid-September, along with a chimney. By the end of the month, the congregation had heat as a result of a donation of a barrel stove by Frank Tooth. J.R. Jackson, a lay minister at the United Church, had fashioned a fine poker, which he presented as a gift for the new church.

The dedication of the Sundre Church of the Nazarene took place at a Christmas Concert on

December 21st, 1947. Irene Sande and Hazel Halvorson directed the concert and the dedication took place before an audience of one hundred and sixty people, with Reverend Lawlor officiating and M.L.A. Norman Cook also in attendance.

Many people contributed in a variety of different ways to the realization of a Nazarene Church for Sundre. Among them were the Savages, McAmmonds, the Melvin Giegers, Frank Tooths, Roy Heyers, John Snaruds, Bill Cabels, Jack Baustards, Lester Bartholows and William Moore. Others contributed gifts of money and labour towards the project.

Mr. Trevor Morgan, who had been appointed as the first Sunday School Superintendent, remained keenly interested in the affairs of the Nazarene Church in Sundre. Since its beginning in 1947, he served on the Church board and was also active in the work of the Church Youth Camp at Harmattan and, for ten years, was its business manager.

Over its sixty-two year history, the Church of the Nazarene has grown to meet the needs of the expanding population of Sundre. Additions and improvements have led to a much larger space that is available for community groups and special events.

Reverend Richard McInnes is the pastor of the Sundre Church of the Nazarene in 2008.



The Sundre Church of the Nazarene in 2007

Community Spirit at its Finest

Rod Macleod

Anyone looking for an example of excellence in community citizenship in the twenty-five year period between the late forties through early seventies needed to look no further than Sundre businessman, Rod Macleod. To a very large degree, Rod's dedication, persistence and vision during that time led to Sundre gaining its rightful place on the map of Alberta as a modern, progressive town. Many changes took place in those twenty-five years as Sundre began to bid a fond farewell to part of its pioneering past and to move towards a more contemporary future.

By 1939, Sundre was a Hamlet of close to 200 people and when WWII broke out, the population increased. The town thrived during the 1940s and 1950s with the development of local business and industry. The most active industries during this period were lumber and oil, which brought a flood of seismic crews and oil strikes in the area surrounding the village.

Rod Macleod was born in Glasgow, Scotland, in 1908, the youngest of five children born to Murdoch (pronounced Murdo in the Scottish tradition) and Christina Macleod. The Macleod family left Scotland for Canada in April 1911 and sailed for Montreal, arriving in that port on May 8th. From there, they traveled by train across Canada to make their home in Calgary. The children grew up in the fledgling town and attended school there.

In 1938, Rod married Isabel Innes of Calgary and over the following years, the couple had three children: Rod (junior) in 1940, Colin in 1942 and Christine in 1949.

In 1947, Rod, who was the owner of the Red and White Store in Cremona, sold his business and moved his family to Sundre to form a partnership with his older brother, John, in running the brand new Red and White Store in Sundre. The store was situated on the northeast corner at the present 4-way stop, where the VHQ Entertainment store operates today. Prior to building the new store, John had run the Sundre Red and White Store from the former N.T. Hagen Store, but when the new store was completed and John moved to Calgary, the older building was run as a hardware store by Bob Rankin, who had joined in a partnership with John. The old store burned to the ground in 1952.

Rod and his family moved into John's house,

which was the original home of Fred Jeannot and the first home in Sundre to have indoor plumbing. In later years this house saw a variety of owners and tenants and in more recent years it housed the Pioneer Veterinary Services clinic. It remains as one of Sundre's historic buildings and for many years now it has served the community as Outlaws Bar and Grill Restaurant. At the time the Macleods lived there, there was almost nothing to the north of the house except the Elders land. The Bearberry Creek meandered very close to the Macleod home at that time and floods were commonplace. This became such a problem that residents took it upon themselves to "move the creek", constructing an entire section of new channel to the north.



The Macleod Family Out Back of the Hagen Store. John Macleod & Ethel Far Left. Rod Macleod & Isabel Far Right. *Photo courtesy of Gary Vooy's*

The Red & White Store originally functioned as a general store. The main floor was split down the middle. On the south side were groceries and on the north side were dry goods and clothing. In later years, the order was reversed. For a time, furniture was sold on the upper floor but when the main floor became groceries only, the upper story became the dry goods department.

In the late 40's and early 50's, Sundre, despite periods of modest expansion, remained a relatively poor community. Money was scarce and many people struggled to provide for their families. Area storekeepers frequently accepted goods and services in exchange for groceries and credit was extended to those who needed it. Rod Macleod was a compassionate man and he did what he could to meet the needs of the community. He ran charge accounts and often carried the debts for extended

periods of time when customers had no money. There were no banks in the town at that time so Rod also offered limited banking services, cashing resident's pay cheques in order to save them a trip to Olds.

Early in 1950, Sundre became a village and Rod was chosen as its first mayor. At that time, Sundre did not extend to the east side of the river and the village was still a comparatively primitive community as far as housing and services were concerned. To that point, there had been no development control and houses, often brought into town from elsewhere, were scattered higgledy-piggledy across the landscape, often with little more than a dirt trail connecting them to the unpaved main street and its few minor arteries. Street lighting was almost non-existent and there were no water mains or sewer services. There was only a single span iron bridge and drivers at either end had to stop and give the right of way to those already on the structure.



The Red & White Store in the Mid-Fifties.

Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum

As Mayor, also one of the founding members of the Sundre Chamber of Commerce, and as a businessman and community member, family and friends remember Rod as a quiet, soft-spoken man who was never pushy, and who consistently maintained a strong sense of wanting to do the right thing. He was a man of high standards and this was reflected in his actions while Mayor of Sundre and in all areas of his life. During his years in office, Sundre saw many changes; this was especially true after Sundre was incorporated as a Town in

1956. Rod remained as Mayor and by that time, oil had been discovered locally and the population had grown substantially. Two mobile home parks were developed to accommodate an increasing influx of oil and gas workers; one across from the present Sobeys Store on Main Avenue West, and the other on land that had belonged to the Ralph Ellithorpes, on the east side of the bridge. The east side had been annexed into Sundre by this time, at Mr. Ellithorpe's request, and the broader tax base helped ease the very high mill rate that west side business had endured for several years previously.

During Mr. Macleod's ten year term, the Town Office, Jail and Fire Hall were built and equipped; sewers and water mains were installed and the Calgary Power franchise took over the local electricity cooperative, bringing a reliable source of power to homes and businesses. Early bylaws brought a sense of order to development, added safeguards to public health, and allowed for penalties to be incurred for property tax arrears. Rod served on several boards and committees and in his spare time he performed bookkeeping services for several non-profit organizations without charge.

In 1959, Rod left municipal politics and became MLA for the Olds-Didsbury Constituency, where he served for five years, withdrawing when provincial boundaries were changed, in order to allow Bob Clarke to continue as MLA. Rod then became involved with the local Chamber of Commerce and led a committee, which would eventually, with the help and encouragement of the entire community, be instrumental in bringing a hospital to Sundre. It has been said that if it were not for Rod Macleod, the Sundre Hospital would never have been built. Rod became the first Chairman of the Hospital Board and he served in this position for eight years.

In 1975, Rod sold the Red and White Store and retired to Victoria B.C. with Isabel. Isabel died in 2000 at the age of eighty-seven and Rod died in 2004, having reached almost ninety-six years of age. He will always be considered a very significant figure in Sundre's history.

In 1983, the store Rod ran for nearly thirty years was destroyed in a spectacular fire that also burned several adjacent businesses. Walt and Diana Wrigley were the owners at that time. The store was rebuilt and had several different owners before being converted to a video rental store in recent years.

Rod and Isabel's youngest son, Colin, left Sundre in 1960, but in September 1968 married Karen Noble, the daughter of Roy and Muriel Noble, who had moved to Sundre in 1955 with their two other children, Jim and Sandra. After many years living in other Alberta locations, with Colin working for twenty-six years as a civil servant, the couple retired to Sundre nine years ago. They have two sons and six grandchildren.



Rod & Isabel Macleod. *Photo courtesy of Gary Vooy*

A Building with a Sixty Year History

Vennard's Store

"This is the story of a building built brick-by-brick by a young couple and a carpenter named Mr. Hale Gochee and his two sons in the year 1946-47, after WWII. The young couple worked at Knott's Trading Post, a store on the east side of the little hamlet of Sundre. After working hours, they proceeded to lay bricks in rows to help Mr. Gochee carry on the next day. The building began to take shape. A second floor would become the living quarters.

The building was to be a general store and it opened in August of 1947. It was called Vennard's Store and supplied everything a farmer or house-

wife might need. There were 100lb bags of flour and white sugar and 20lb bags of rolled oats; 50lb blocks of salt; Hi-test gas and kerosene for lamps; fresh produce once a week and meat when the truck came in. Wedges were sold off round blocks of Cheddar cheese; and long bologna, whole or sliced, was available. Cookies came in big boxes and were sold by the pound. There were also winter clothes: boots, real wool underwear and Levis and Wrangler jeans. Even dresses were displayed. It was truly a family store. Credit was available and if the bill couldn't be paid it was settled with an exchange of cattle, pigs, or eggs or when the customer got his pay cheque.

The store became the place to meet and visit and eat peanuts out of a big barrel while you waited for your list of groceries to be put up. Every item was written down on a bill and totalled. The customers missed this special accommodation when the Vennard's Store was no more.

The building was a landmark for many homecoming children where they remembered their school days and the trips at noon hour to the store for pop and candies.

Soon, the landmark will be only a memory for those who remember the past."

The Preceding article was submitted by Rose Vennard, 2007

Everett Vennard and his twin, Evelyn, were born at Chinook, Alberta, on May 6, 1919, to Levi and Astessie Vennard, originally from Michigan, USA. When the twins were only three years old, their mother passed away and Levi was left to raise a family of seven children alone. The Vennards moved to the Olds area in 1930 and several years later to the Sundre area. As a young man, Everett worked for Harry Jones, milking cows and stooking grain for fifty cents a day, and later, at a sawmill west of Sundre. It was while at the sawmill that Everett and his co-workers felled a tree and uncovered a hibernating bear and her two cubs. Everett and his brother, Ray, snared one of the little bears and took it home, where they raised it and it became a playmate and companion. The bear would wrestle with the boys and go swimming with them, always being the first to hit the water. Eventually, the bear became too big to handle and the family had to learn to be content with less exotic pets.

At the age of seventeen, in 1936, Everett went to work at Knott's Trading Post. Over the almost ten years that he worked there, Everett became very fond of his employers, Ed and Betty Knott. He and Ed shared a friendship that spilled into their leisure time, taking them on numerous fishing trips together. It was while at Knott's that Everett made the acquaintance of Rose Ellithorpe, born in 1921, and a daughter of Ralph and Alice Ellithorpe, who lived near the Knotts. Several years later the couple were married and they built a home on the Bergen Road. A home for Everett's dad, Levi, was built nearby, but only a year later, at the age of fifty-four, Levi passed away.

Rose also worked at the store for a time and it was the suggestion of their bosses that the pair should set up their own general store in another area of town. Ed and Betty had purchased a considerable amount of land in Sundre since their arrival; they owned properties from within the downtown area up to the present hospital site. They offered Everett and Rose a downtown lot, close to the Bearberry Creek, for one hundred dollars and the young people were happy to accept. While Rose continued to work for the Knotts, Everett supervised the building of the store. It was constructed of brick, a rather novel concept for the times and the area. Hale Gochee and his two sons were involved in the project and also a cabinetmaker from Olds. When the building was completed, Everett went to the bank in Olds and requested a loan for three thousand dollars with which to stock the store. He was turned down flat. Luckily, there were those who had faith in the young couple's ability to make a go of things; among them a judge Everett knew from Olds, and Ed Knott. Both these good samaritans advanced a thousand dollars to the cause, and soon Vennard's Store was stocked and ready to start serving the community. It brought the total of general stores in Sundre to three; the other two being Knott's Trading Post and the Red and White Store, owned by John Macleod and his brother, Rod, who became Sundre's first Mayor.

In 1947, when Vennard's Store opened its doors, the population of Sundre was starting to expand. The extreme difficulties of the thirties and the widespread rationing of the war years were eased, but not erased. Money was still in short supply for many people and some rationing persisted. Everett and Rose worked very hard to

make a success of their store, but like other local business people, they found themselves extending credit to the many customers who didn't have a regular income. This, of course, affected the couple's ability to keep on top of their own debts and they began to worry about the two thousand dollars they had borrowed from Ed Knott and the Olds judge. They decided to sell their home on the Bergen Road and move into the apartment above the store. This enabled them to stay open later than the other stores and spend Wednesdays, the business centre's traditional closing day, doing inventory and packaging bulk supplies. Vennard's Store catered specifically to local people, including the many children who stopped in for candy and snacks on their way to and from school, and also to area farmers. In this way, they did not encroach on the business of their benefactors, the Knotts, who focussed mostly on supplying area businesses.



The Brick Built Vennard's Store.

Photo courtesy of Rose Vennard

In 1953, a son, Bob, was born to Rose and Everett. Everett immediately gave the baby the nickname of "Bonspiel Bobby" because he was born as Everett competed in a Bonspiel!

The Vennard's lives became even busier with a little one to take care of, but the store was doing well, as was the business, which became known as V & E, that Everett had entered into in 1958 with Rose's brother, Ernie. The men worked in heavy construction and sulphur crushing, with Ernie supplying most of the labour and Everett helping out with both capital and labour when required.

In 1961, Everett sold his share of V&E to Ernie

and once again devoted his full time energies to the store.

In 1970, Everett and Rose sold their stock to Stan Gamble and leased the building to him. The little family moved into a house they had had Bill Wilson build for them a year earlier on 1st Avenue N.E.

Nine years later, the store building was sold to Henry Dinnsen and the Vennards began to take life a little easier.

Everett passed away on May 4, 1989. Rose continues to live in the couple's 1st Avenue home. In 2007, she lives a very active life, enjoying good friendships, her cabin at Coal Camp, and curling. She and Everett ran movies from Hagen Hall in Sundre during the thirties and forties and were involved with the formation of the first curling club in Sundre.

The building that was originally Vennard's Store, just south of the Bearberry Creek Bridge, is one of Sundre's oldest surviving structures. Since its many years as a general store, it has been, among other things, a veterinary clinic, a daycare centre, a deli and bookstore and, most recently, a



Rose Vennard and Infant Son, Bob, in Front of Truck & Store. *Photo courtesy of Rose Vennard*

restaurant, "Roscoes". It is presently unoccupied and a condominium complex has been built on the east end of the lot.



Everett & Rose Vennard & Son, Bob.

Photo courtesy of Rose Vennard

Serving the Needs of Area Farmers

Sundre Feed Mill

Fred Mitchell moved to the Dawson Creek area in 1928 from eastern Canada. While living there, he met his future wife, Kay Neufeld, the eighth child of Elizabeth and Peter Neufeld.

The couple married in December 1932 and had one son, Roy.

In 1939, Fred bought a quarter section of land seven miles west of Sundre and worked at various sawmills throughout the area. While he was away from home, Kay looked after the farm and ran a trap line to supplement the family's income.

Seven years later, in 1946, the couple moved into Sundre and purchased a house on the east side of the river, and then in 1948, in partnership with George Lutkehaus, Fred built the Sundre Feed Mill on that property.

For a period of approximately six months in 1951, the feed mill was shut down. This was in response to the provincial government's threat to enforce the Coarse Grains Marketing Act, which would force all operators to buy and sell through

its marketing board. When the mill re-opened in January 1952, it had converted to 100 percent electrical operation. The four engines in use to provide power to the facility resulted in the mill having the largest electrical installation in Sundre.

In 1953 Mr. Lutkehaus sold his share of the business to Fred. An addition was built in 1956 to handle increased feed service demands. Unfortunately, on December 2nd, 1959, the building burned, despite efforts to save it by the Sundre Fire Department. To help finance the rebuilding of the business, Fred sold the family farm and by 1960 he was able to open the doors of a brand new facility.

In 1965, the feed mill was sold to Don Sarsons and then, later, Love Feeds took it over. Roy Grisswell was manager for quite some time. Fred Mitchell passed away in 1992 and Kay Mitchell died at the age of ninety-three in 2007.

Niels Eskesen, who owned Sundre Farm and Ranch Supply, located in the original Vennard Store, close to where the new condominium block is being built in 2007, took ownership of the feed mill in 1981.

Niels was born on June 13, 1922, in Alida, Saskatchewan, and his wife, Agnete, was born May 13, 1924, in the USA. They came to Sundre in the fall of 1945, when Niels joined his brother in a saw milling operation.

After Niels purchased the feed mill, three of the Eskesen's five children, Darlene, Shirley and Lyle helped their dad with the business. Darlene and Shirley often bagged and loaded the grain, and some of the older men who came for supplies were shocked that the two young women were doing what was considered "men's work". Regardless of how old and feeble they were themselves, some of these old timers insisted on doing their own loading.

The two other Eskesen children are David, who lives in Calgary, and Sharon, who is near Grande Prairie.

Niels operated the Sundre Feed Mill for ten years, before selling to Lyle and his wife, Anne. Several years later, the younger Eskesens sold out to Marty and Deanna Ringland, who in 2007, still operate it, under the name of Sundre Livestock and Farm Supply Limited.

The buildings, constructed by Fred Mitchell in 1960, still stand, but a large addition was built on the south side in later years. Besides the farm

and livestock supplies, the Ringlands offer their customers a large selection of pet foods and supplies, tropical fish, equestrian supplies and western jewellery and gifts.



Sundre Feed Mill in 2007

After retiring from the feed mill business, Niels Eskesen became a very active member of the Sundre and District Historical Society, serving as its president for a number of years. A tragic accident befell him in 2002 when he was working on a new reception centre for the museum. He died as a result of his injuries in August of that year. The Niels Eskesen Reception Centre was recently named in his memory. In 2007, Mrs. Agnete Eskesen still resides in Sundre, as do several of her children.

Animal Trainer Extraordinaire

Russ Greenwood – A Legend in His Own Time

The Sundre story would not be complete without highlighting one of the community's most fondly remembered citizens: Russ Greenwood came to the district in 1948, purchasing a quarter section of land seven miles west of town from Mr. Theron Sarles. He spent one night on the quarter and then came into town the next day and purchased an acreage on the banks of the Red Deer River. Here he would make his home until 1977, achieving many amazing feats during that time period and creating enduring memories for Sundre residents and for people as far away as Montreal.

Russel Henry Greenwood was the third of ten children born to William and Ella Greenwood. He

entered the world on July 9th, 1892, at Okotoks, Alberta, a true pioneer infant and one who would grow up to characterize many admirable traits of his western heritage. When he was only nine days old, Russ had his first ride on a horse, cradled in his mother's arms for the journey to their new home in the Berrydale district. From that day on, horses would become his life.

Russ's first home was similar to those of many early settlers. It was built of logs and had a sod roof. Mattresses for the beds were filled with hay or straw. William made all the furniture for the home and Ella provided the finishing touches by creating knitted or rag rugs. The family had its share of the difficulties and tragedies experienced by so many pioneers, but Ella's wonderful sense of humour eased the family through the tough times and there were many happy memories to balance the sad ones.

Russ had a great love for all animals and shared a special connection with them. He began breaking horses and steers when he was still a boy and as he grew older, this talent provided a source of income for him. At the age of fifteen, Russ had his own brand – an upright cross over an X – and it was registered in his name all his life.

The Greenwood family moved around Central Alberta quite a lot in the early years and Russ attended a variety of different schools, but when he was eighteen he struck out on his own and began homesteading in the Munson area. As well as breaking livestock, he found he also enjoyed trading, and this too became a way of life for the young man. Three years after proving up his first homestead, Russ moved to Paradise Valley and then made several more moves over the years that followed. During this time, on April 25th, 1917 he married Violet Rowles, and the couple would eventually have three sons, Lyle, Lloyd (Bud) and Roy.

Russ loved the stampede scene and participated in several events, including bronc riding and steer riding. During the course of this phase of his life, he won a number of awards and trophies. Russ also loved to dance and was able to combine several of his favourite pastimes when, in the 1920's, he began organizing combined rodeo/dance events and providing the bucking horses for the rodeos. He became very involved with the Calgary Stampede in its early years and much of what followed later was related to this connection.



Russ Greenwood as a Young Man at Paradise Valley. *Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum*

Russ was a man of many talents and most of them were related to animals. He made and sold halters for many years and even spent a short period in the window of the Eatons Store in Calgary, manufacturing skipping ropes for children. His live demonstrations delighted the public and resulted in many sales. It was not until he moved to Sundre, however, that Russ, already in his late fifties, expanded his special connection with animals and created his own one-man animal show. His trick horse, "Little Beaver", became legendary. He trained a coyote, "Elmer", apparently christened after Russ's younger brother of the same name, and a badger, "Tibby". There was also "Stinky", the skunk, and "Peter" the rabbit. "Billy the Kid" was a goat and "Mae West" and "Little Jack" were donkeys. "Sonny Boy" was a Jersey steer and, of course, over the years, Russ's dogs, among them "Pal" and "Silver Lassie", were a big part of the act. His cat was also included. It must have taken incredible patience and understanding to tame and train such a wide variety of animals, some of them natural enemies, and then to have them perform together. Eventually, the animal act was sold and Russ began spending a great deal of time working with bovines. He trained a team of oxen, a pair of Brahma bulls, and also a team of four Highland cattle for the Calgary Stampede. The Highland cattle pulled a covered wagon, to the delight of Rodeo fans, and also were used to transport Russ's home made shack-on-wheels, jokingly known as his "Winnebago", which was reminiscent of a tinker's wagon.



Russ on his Trick Horse, Possibly "Little Beaver". *Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum*



Russ in 1969. *Photo courtesy of Mary Lund*

Famous chuck wagon driver and Calgary Stampede Manager, Dick Cosgrave, approached Russ and suggested he break a team of buffalo for the Calgary Stampede Board. Russ, knowing this to be a huge challenge, even for him, gave it some



Russ with his Team of Highland Cattle, his "Winnebago", and Elmer the Coyote. *Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum*

thought and eventually agreed he was up to it, although he would make no guarantee regarding the results. Buffalo are big and very powerful and, unlike Highland cattle, Brahma bulls and oxen, they had proved they

did not adapt well to domestication. A bull and cow team was purchased by the board and transported to Russ's riverside acreage in Sundre. They were named Punch and Judy. One of the first tasks was to design and build rigging for the animals and Russ was grateful for the knowledge passed on to him from Mr. Burrell, the father of Edith Burrell, who had advised him on building harnesses for oxen.

When the stampede board had purchased the buffalo, they had planned to raise young from the animals. However, Russ found the bull, Punch, to be mean and difficult to handle in his natural state and had the animal neutered. The female, Judy, was also neutered, effectively doing away with any complications encountered by her coming into season. In the meantime, the beast's horns caused problems because they were not symmetrical. Besides being not very pleasing aesthetically, the wayward horns were also a source of danger when working around the animals, for they protruded at different angles and directions. Russ was advised that it would be impossible to correct the problem, but through a system of bolts and weights, he was able to get all horn tips pointing upwards symmetrically and the animals eventually made a much more attractive team and were safer to handle.

After only one season on the Greenwood acre-

age, Punch and Judy were trained to pull a two-wheel cart and were ready to make their debut at the Calgary Stampede. Special arrangements had to be made for accommodating and showing them, for while these animals were trained to drive, they could never be tamed, per se; and were

extremely dangerous. When away from home, Russ always stayed close to his buffalo in his little trailer. Punch and Judy became the mascots of the Calgary Brewery, and Russ was paid fifty dollars every time they performed on the Brewery's be-



Russ with "Punch" and "Judy", possibly in Calgary. *Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum*

half. The company featured the animals on beer bottle caps for quite a few years.

As the fame of the buffalo and their trainer grew, so too did the distance they travelled to perform and the number of adventures they encountered en route. They appeared in Wetaskiwin, Edmonton, Regina and Toronto and then, in 1967, Russ and the animals were invited to appear at Expo in Montreal. It was a very special occasion, and a difficult one in many ways, for the narrow streets of Montreal were packed with people and Russ had to be exceedingly careful as he drove his team through them. Still, the trainer and his team were a resounding hit with the spectators and the trip was one of the highlights of the years Russ spent with Punch and Judy.

Sadly, after fifteen years working with and showing the buffalo, Russ had to release his charges to the care of the Calgary Stampede and Exhibition Board. New management had deemed the act too expensive to continue, and without a great deal of warning or ceremony, the animals were taken from Russ's care. Members of the Calgary Stampede stock crew tried in vain to persuade the board to make a gift of the animals to their trainer, but they were adamant in their decision against this. Jim Armstrong, a member of the

stock crew, maintained that this action "nearly broke an old man's heart" and that even when Judy broke off her longest stub horn and Russ begged to buy it from the board as a memento, he was refused. In his contribution to the Russ Greenwood Story, written by Sundre resident Lesley Munns in 1981, Jim Armstrong had the following to say about his friend, Russ, who was small in stature, and the way he was treated following the election of the new Stampede Board:

"Here was a little man, out from the willows, proving he had more natural ability with wild animals than any before him, having his credibility snatched away. Such a waste. And who is to say if one of his calibre will ever pass this way again."

Punch and Judy were retired and turned out to pasture at the Stampede Grounds, to the care of Fred Burton, while their patient and trusted trainer, Russ Greenwood, was awarded a Lifetime Free Pass to the Calgary Stampede and a plaque commemorating his contribution to the Calgary Stampede Parade.



Russ Greenwood & Fred Burke Admiring the Buffalo. *Photo courtesy of Mary Lund*

Life changed drastically for Russ, but he dealt with his disappointments and continued to break and train horses from his Sundre home. He was a quiet man, a loner - usually much happier in the company of his beloved animals than in the company of other humans, but he was known as a good man, ready to help his neighbour in difficult times and always courteous in his ways. He was a familiar sight in town over a period of many years, as he rode one green horse or another through Sundre streets, quietly and calmly introducing each one to the sounds, sights and smells of the semi-urban surroundings. A few drivers were not

courteous when coming across Russ and his latest young charge, and he was involved in at least one accident as a result of this, although luckily, not badly injured. Most people, though, showed great respect for the aging cowboy and his "students". An admirer and friend was Betty Knott, who with her husband, Ed, ran Knott's Trading Post. Russ shopped regularly at the store and often came across Betty in her car when he was out and about training a horse. She always pulled over and allowed Russ and his charge to go ahead of her. The very first day Russ drove his buffalo through town, Betty had him stop at the store and pose for photographs. Russ was also acquainted with Tilford Hagen, the son of Sundre's founders, N.T. and Elizabeth Hagen. His long-time friend was Ollie Clark, who lived at Bergen and among other friends were Dick West; Lawrence and Blanche Wells; Mrs. Evelyn Tyler and Wilfred Helmer.

Russ Greenwood's days in Sundre drew to a close shortly after he was involved in an accident while training a horse. At the age of eighty-five, in 1977, he had hooked a colt up to a cart and was driving it around town. Although Russ never remembered what it was, something happened which resulted in the elderly cowboy becoming unconscious. He woke up in the Sundre Hospital and assumed he had somehow hit his head, although it did not hurt and he appeared to have no other injuries. He wanted to go home, and Oddetta Pollock, who was a nurse at the hospital at that time, drove him to his little house by the river where he'd spent twenty-nine years of his life. The next day, Russ wasn't feeling at all well and he had Ollie Clark phone his son, Lyle, in Paradise Valley. He stayed with Lyle for a time and then became a resident of the newly built Pioneer Lodge in Lloydminster.

Russ donated some of his belongings and mementos to the Sundre Museum. It must have been a sad day for him when he had to turn his back on the growing community where he had spent so many happy and productive years and say goodbye to the friends and acquaintances he had made.

The land where Russ trained his animal act; his oxen; his Highland steers; his beloved buffalo and a great many young horses, was sold to Lyle Greenwood. Eventually, the acreage became part of Sundre's Municipal Campground, which was named Greenwood Park in honour of its former resident. A buffalo on Sundre's town logo and flag

gives recognition to the small, wiry cowboy who is still remembered by long-time residents with deep affection and respect. Sundre and area has been referred to as "Greenwood Country" for many years now, and several businesses have incorporated the memory of Russ Greenwood into their name.

Russ remained at the lodge in Lloydminster until 1981, when he moved to Three Hills. Later still, he moved to Wainwright. At the time of Alberta's 75th Birthday celebrations in 1980, Russ and three of his family members were recipients of Anniversary Gold Medals. Having experienced more than eighty-nine years in the saddle, he continued riding well past his departure from Sundre.

Watchmaker Business Opened in Late 40s

Lund's Jewellery and Gift Shoppe

Louis and Mary Lund were married in 1946, having known each other since high school days.

Mary, born in Calgary, was the fourth child of Robert and Annie Hendry, both from England, who had arrived in the Westcott district in 1910 and married a year later. Following their marriage, the couple set up a homestead in the Eagle Valley area.

When Robert purchased a homestead in High Prairie, Annie refused to move and stayed in Eagle Valley with Mary, who attended the Eagle Valley School. At the age of six, Mary showed an interest in milking the family's cows and her mother allowed her to do this. For the next nine or ten years, she milked the cows before and after school.

By the time Mary was old enough for high school, the old Eagle Point School, which was located three miles north of Sundre, had been moved into the hamlet and she began to attend there, boarding with Fred and Mabel Burke. John Weir was principal at that time. Mary also worked part time at Knott's Trading Post.

After completing school, Mary was accepted into the Holy Cross School of Nursing in Calgary, but lack of financing and her mother's poor health prevented her from attending. Instead, she went to work for Aunt Jean Mjolsness, at the café housed in the original Sundre Hotel building. Later, she returned to Knott's Trading Post to work.

Louis Lund was the son of Mr. & Mrs. Andrew Lund and was born in 1922 at Cranbrook, BC. Following the marriage of Louis and Mary, the Lunds lived at the Fred Burke residence for a time and then moved into a house on 1st Avenue NE which was owned by Sundre Contracting, where Louis was employed as a planer. Mary also found work with that company as a bookkeeper.



Newly-weds, Louis & Mary Lund.

Photo courtesy of Phyllis Burke

In 1948, the couple's only child, Norman, was born, and a year later, following the death of Mary's mom, the Lunds decided to open a watchmaker shop from their home, which by then they had purchased from Sundre Contracting. They started small, with just a few watches and a small assortment of silverwear, while Louis repaired watches in his spare time, but by 1953, they were able to move the business into a small store built by Colonel Bowman, roughly located where James McAllister operates his financial services business today. By this time, the business had expanded to include wedding sets and other jewellery, greeting cards, wedding invitations and china. Josie Bramley (Rock) was hired as a part time assistant and she was a great help to Lund's Jewellery and

Gift Shoppe for many years. It wasn't long before business had increased enough to enable Louis to quit his job and devote more time to the store.



The First Store Operated by Louis and Mary Lund. *Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum*

In 1961, Lund's Jewellery and Gift Shoppe was relocated to a building on Centre Street. Dave and Phyllis Burke had opened the Variety and Gift Store just a little south of this, on the NW corner at the 4-way stop, and other businesses in that area included Don's Men's Wear, a hairdressing salon and an insurance and real estate agent. The Lunds operated the business here until 1981, when it was sold to Andy and Pauline Michaelchuck and renamed "The Gold Tree". Now located on Main Avenue West, Sundre's present jewellery store, Valley Jewellers, is owned by Bill and Judy Brose.

Mary and Louis loved to attend country dances and ball games and Louis was a member of a local drama club, organized by Aunt Jean Mjolsness. He was also an original member of the Volunteer Fire Department and served on Town Council for ten years, including a term as Mayor of Sundre. Mary enjoyed her involvement with the O.O.R.P. (Royal Purple) and for many years served as their historian. After the sale of the store, Louis returned to the lumber business he loved, running a small mill from a property in the Bergen area.

In 1979, tragedy struck Louis and Mary Lund with the sudden death of their only child, Norman. The years that followed were difficult ones for the couple, but they devoted themselves to raising

their grandchildren, Michael and Laurie, and took great pride in seeing them grow into adults and begin raising their own families.

In 2002, Louis enjoyed a special birthday at his mill with family and friends. He celebrated reaching eighty by spending the afternoon sawing logs!

The Lunds continued to live in the house on 1st Avenue until Mary suffered a stroke in 2007 and Louis fell and broke his hip. Within a few months of these incidents, the couple moved to a senior's residence in Olds. Sadly, Louis passed away a short time later, in July 2007, and Mary has had to adjust to life without him.

The Lunds will be remembered by their friends in Sundre for all their years in business, and for the many ways they contributed to the community they loved.

Sundre Public Library

Library Formed in 1949

In 1949, the Sundre Public Library opened in the Womens' Institute Hall, located just north of Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Church and the Sundre Elks Hall. In the beginning, the hall donated space and local residents donated many of the books. A library service that served Toronto hospitals also donated a supply of books. Library volunteers, Mrs. Bramley and Mrs. Eileen Miller, were sent on a three-day course, which qualified them to serve as librarians. Eileen was the wife of Sundre physician, Dr. C.A. Miller, and over a period of many years was a dedicated volunteer to the library.

In its early years, the library was only open one day a week - Friday 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and it closed its doors during the months of July and August.

As time went by, the library outgrew its allocation of space in the WI Hall. Because of its many eager young readers, the library carried a good selection of children's books, and when the school began a library of its own, the public library traded off its selection of children's books for the building behind the elementary school, which had previously been used by the school as a home economics room. The Town of Sundre moved this former school building and placed it on a cement foundation for the library. Unfortunately, library

volunteers were soon to discover that this was not a practical move: The shelves were not strong enough to carry the heavy load of books and they collapsed, some falling through the floor. This meant the library was again looking for a home. The dilemma was resolved when the Town agreed to provide a small space in the Fire Hall building.

Throughout the early years of the public library's operation, many people worked to make it a success. As well as Mrs. Bramley and Mrs. Miller, other local residents gave generously of their time and expertise. Among them was Annie Doyle. The mother of a large brood of children, Annie and her family had moved to the Sundre area from Saskatchewan. She was an active participant in the Sundre community and an enthusiastic volunteer at the library. She eventually became librarian. Eileen Miller credited Annie and a few other dedicated people as being instrumental in preventing the closure of the library during some particularly difficult times.

When the decision was made in the 1970's to build Wild Rose Court, Sundre's first government sponsored senior's residence, it was suggested that the basement area be developed and used for a craft room and a library. As always, library supporters were enthusiastic and "bricks" were sold to raise the \$30,000.00 needed for the project.

With the new and expanded quarters completed by 1976, the next improvement was realized when the County of Mountain View amalgamated all its libraries with Parkland Regional Library of Lacombe. This gave county residents access to a greater variety of books and the ability to request books from other sources within the Parkland operation. Also, the new arrangement led to increased funding for the library, with the County and the Town each contributing on a per capita basis.

In 1980, the library reached the status of a Municipal Library, with the province granting funding of three dollars per capita. The surrounding district supports the library, and is represented on its board.

In recent years, Shari McNabb was head librarian at the Wild Rose Court facility and in the new expanded library, located in the Sundre Community Centre, which opened in 2006. She left her position in 2007 and, in July of that year, Lonestar Stone from Olds was hired for the position.

The much larger and considerably brighter

library includes a children's activity and reading area and an expanded adult section. Several computer stations have been set up for public use.

From its early and sometimes troubled beginnings, the library has earned its place as one of Sundre's most important and most beloved public services. Its volunteers and staff, along with supporters and advocates have all contributed greatly to its growth over the decades. The Sundre Municipal Library celebrates its 60th Birthday in 2009.

Snippets from the First Half of the Century

First Blacksmith

A man by the name of Christopher Columbus, aka Lum Sheets, was Sundre's first official blacksmith.

Drama Club Formed

Mrs. Heaton was the director of the drama club, which was introduced in Sundre in the late 1920's. She was also one of the players. Other players were: Mr. and Mrs. Ed Corless; Grace Corless; Joe Heaton and Mrs. Walt Davidson.

Between seventy and one hundred people attended the presentations offered by the club, most of which were held in Sundre or Harmattan. The club ran for about four years.

Sundre Girls Club 1926

Initiated by Susie Steen and Mrs. Jenny Heaton, in 1926, the Sundre Girls Club welcomed young women age sixteen to twenty-plus. The Club had its own basketball team and enjoyed many forms of socializing, including picnics and drama presentations. The girls' uniform consisted of black bloomers and gold middies. Both Susie and Jennie were leaders and Faye Adams (Rankin) was secretary/treasurer of the club. Membership included Agnes and Stella Bradley; Grace Coreless, Haddie Madsen and Helen Clay. Unfortunately, the club was disbanded after running only a short while.

Community Skating Rink 1935

Built by Nate Ellithorpe in 1935, the community's first official outdoor skating rink was located just south of the creamery building. Sundre's early hockey teams used the rink and Mr. Ellithorpe, manager of the creamery at that time, used to transport them to out of town games in his big truck.

Sundre Sports Club 1936

Formed in 1936, the Sundre Sports Club organized community dances and other social events. John Macleod served as the first President of the club, with Mrs. R. Johnson serving as Vice President and Fred Jeannot as Secretary-Treasurer. Bessie Heaton (Ellithorpe) was Secretary in later years. The club was very successful and ran until well into the 1940's.

Pool Hall Was a Door Prize in 1938

In 1938, Harry Norton, of Caroline, donated a building he had constructed the previous year as a door prize at a dance held at the Olds Arena. A huge crowd of revellers watched as newlywed, Mrs. Ernest Pearce, pulled out the winning dance ticket. Carl Christenson was declared the winner. Consequently, Mr. Christenson sold his farm in the Red Deer Valley district and moved to Sundre, where he opened his "prize" as the Sundre Pool Hall. It was located behind the present Sundre Hotel close to where Westview Insurance Services stands today. He operated the pool hall for a number of years in conjunction with a barbershop and then retired from the business.

Hi Mitchell was the next owner of the pool hall until he sold it some years later to Sundre Investments, a company formed by Jack Morgan and several area businessmen when the Sundre Hotel was being built. At this point, Steve Slyzen and Jack Phillips became the operators. It was eventually demolished.

Through the years since that time there have been several pool halls in various locations. The last one, located east of the Sundre Hotel, closed in 2006.

Home Guard Unit 1940

A Home Guard Unit of the reserve Army was formed in Sundre in 1940. Initially, their battalion was the Strathcona Horse, then it was changed to the Armoured Division Calgary Tank #114. The unit paraded in Sundre every Wednesday evening and in Olds once a month.

1943 - The Opening of Sundre Bakery

George and Thelma Savage opened the Sundre Bakery in 1943 and owned the building until 1963, when Neil Vanderzwan took ownership. Neil had a new building constructed a few years later and operated the business until 1977, when it was sold to Louis and Donna Kovaks. The building has served as a restaurant in recent years, with several different owners.

Carmen Phillips Trucking 1945

Carmen Phillips was born in South Dakota to Clarence and Ella Phillips. In 1939 he married Florence Lindsay and over the years the couple produced ten children.

In 1945 Carmen started Carmen Phillips Trucking and two years later expanded the operation to include the hauling of gravel. Several of Carmen's sons were involved in the business and it was a very busy and successful company for many decades. It eventually underwent some changes and became known as Dar-Car Trucking Ltd., and is still in operation today.

Sundre Band 1946

Peter Shepherd was responsible for the formation of the Sundre Band in 1946 and became its Bandmaster. Eighteen other community members played in the band. These were: Trevor Morgan, Fred Mitchell, Ted Weins, Randy Christopher, Ivan Mercer, Henry Beauchamp, Ted Beauchamp, Jack Macleod, Bessie (Heaton) Ellithorpe, Mrs. C.C. Jackson, Bert Barry, John Weir, Danny Sandulak, Don Cook, Alf Thomas, Ray Bowman, Ed Halvorson and Jack McGonigal. After presenting many enjoyable performances, the band was dissolved in 1963.



The Sundre Band in 1943. *Photo courtesy of Phyllis Burke*

“Memories” Photo Albumn to 1950



Mule Team & Crew Building the James River Road in About 1905. *Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum*



John Rindal & Mule Team at Rock Cut.
Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum



Construction of the Road on Sundre Hill (East)
About 1905. Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum



Early Car at Rock Cut.
Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum



Down Town Sundre in About 1924.
Photo courtesy of Sundre Round Up archives



Clara Bramley & Friends During 1943 Floods.
Photo courtesy of Phyllis Burke



Bill Allen, Sam Allen, Mary with Steve Pearson in his Model T
Outing in the Pearce Family Car.
Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum & Gary Vooy's



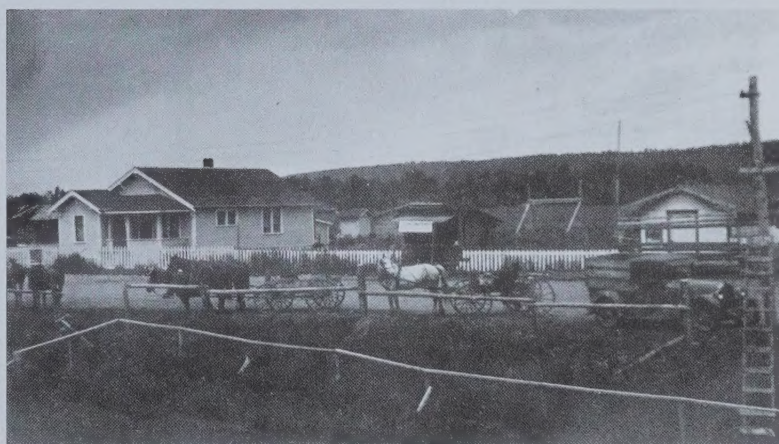
Floods in Sundre. Date Unknown.
Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum



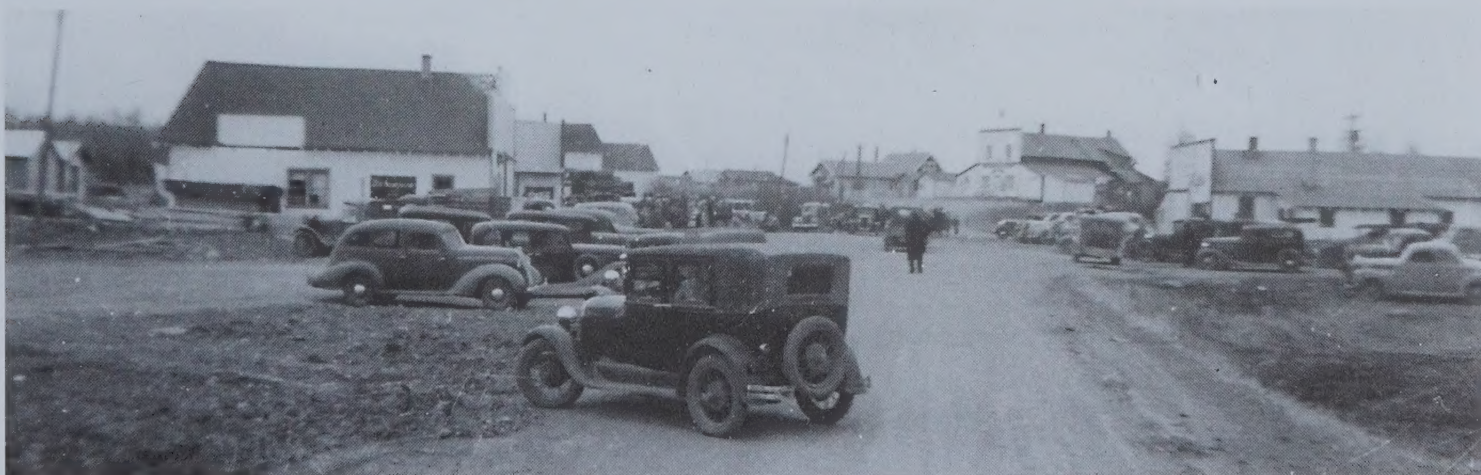
View from Sundre Hill on Highway 27 in 1945.
Photo courtesy of Mary Lund



Phyllis (Davidson) Burke & Friends During 1943 Floods. *Photo courtesy of Phyllis Burke*



Fred Jeannot's House.
Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum



Looking West of Downtown Sundre in 1946. *Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum*



N.T. Hagen Sits Outside his Old Store. *Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum*



Sundre's Main Intersection During V.E. Parade in 1945. *Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum*

1950 - The Dawn of Change

In 1950, Sundre became a designated village – a sure sign that the community was continuing to expand, even if this was occurring relatively slowly. The war years were over; several new businesses and a flurry of community groups had opened their doors; the mood of the population was cautiously optimistic, schools were becoming centralized and Sundre was bussing rural students into the community for their educations. The village elected its first Council. Rod Macleod was the first and only mayor of the Village of Sundre and Wallace Savage was the Village's first appointed Secretary-Treasurer. With local government came the opportunity to introduce much needed services and the first such service to be initiated was a local Fire Department. Bylaws were also introduced and passed, bringing a greater degree of order and development control to the village. Sundre was beginning to come of age, but in 1950 it could not have envisioned the rapid and permanent changes that were to take place within the next few years.

At the beginning of the second half of the twentieth century, Sundre was still primarily an agricultural community. Its businesses, while serving the needs of village residents, to a large degree, also catered to the needs of the greater community, which, of course, was a farming and ranching community. A welding shop, a farm equipment dealership, a feed mill, a creamery, and several other farm related companies in business in Sundre at that time, depended greatly on their rural customers for their survival.

Agriculture would continue to play a large role in Sundre's commercial development, but it was the development of major oil fields in the area in 1954 that prompted a wave of new business ventures that would cater specifically to the lucrative new industry.

Sundre got a little crazy for a while, as more and more wells were drilled and more and more transient workers poured into the community, straining, and often overwhelming the existing facilities for accommodation and sustenance. New residents, employed by the oil industry, came here in increasing numbers; existing residents, although thankful for the employment opportunities presented by the oil boom, were nervous about the speed at which their lives were changing; local government officials were sometimes hard pressed to keep up with the extra demands the influx of people was placing on their agenda and on the basic infrastructure and available services of the village. The community wasn't in chaos, but sometimes, with all the activity and change, it must have felt like something pretty close to that.

Despite the upheavals the village experienced as a result of the oil boom, it was an exciting time for everyone involved. New entrepreneurs had been given a wonderful opportunity for development and existing businesses were seeing a growth in profits; Town coffers were improving as a result of an expanded tax base; employment choices were growing and offering the probability of improved earnings. For the first time in its history, Sundre's future growth seemed assured, and while there would still be problems and challenges to overcome, the years ahead looked very good indeed.

By 1956, Sundre's population had increased substantially, qualifying the village for incorporation as a town. For the little community that had often struggled for its existence, this was a huge step forward, and while the population figures would fluctuate over the coming years, particularly as the first wild wave of oil development normalized, it would remain viable enough to keep its new status.

As a Town, the community became eligible for additional government grants and loans. This led to the improvement of roads, street lighting, essential services and municipal water and sewer services. It also resulted in new services such as policing and the installation of natural gas. Seniors housing became a priority and by the 1970s three seniors apartment buildings were in the works, followed by a seniors lodge in the 1980s.

In 1986, the Caroline Gas Field was discovered and shortly afterwards it went into production, leading to the construction of the Caroline Gas Plant and the reality of additional employment opportunities for Sundre and area residents. This was another very significant boost for the local economy but, like the oil boom thirty-two years earlier, it was also a time of upheaval and anxiety for the community. Many of the wells being drilled contained what is known as "sour gas". In the case of the

Caroline Field, the gas contained exceptionally high levels of hydrogen sulfide (H₂S). The accidental release of H₂S into the atmosphere, even in very small amounts, could result in deadly consequences. The processing and flaring of sour gas resulted in another highly toxic substance, sulphur dioxide (SO₂), being released and this was also a grave concern for residents. The community faced a substantial challenge, this time involving the apparent threat to the health and safety of its residents, and the livestock many depended on for their livelihood. Even though it meant taking on some of the largest oil and gas companies in the world, the residents of Sundre and area insisted on their concerns and demands being heard. Many months of meetings and forums followed, some of them pretty heated. Eventually, concessions were made on both sides, and while not everyone was satisfied with the results, some constructive changes began to take place, setting a precedent for changes to public safety practices and information access across the province. Just as important, perhaps, was the fact that people – the Sundre and area people – had stood up to the giant corporations, bringing in government agencies and watchdogs when necessary, and had persevered until at least some of their demands were met. Of course, in the end, it was the oil and gas companies who were the biggest winners, but there is no disputing the many benefits the development of the Caroline Field brought to the local community.

A year after the discovery of the extensive natural gas fields, Sunpine Forest Products was founded by a couple of young men with big dreams who hailed from Canada's Maritime shores. This company has grown to become a highly successful enterprise and an essential element of Sundre's stability and its employment choices. The lumber industry is alive and well in the Sundre area, as it was more than a hundred years ago.

In the years since the discovery of the Caroline Gas Field, Sundre has seen steady and fairly consistent growth. Families from the larger centres, anxious to find a serene haven away from the bustle of city life, have discovered the magic of the Sundre area and many have acquired summer homes and cottages here. Others have made Sundre their permanent home. Services, such as restaurants and coffee shops, have increased accordingly and longer standing businesses and stores are busier than ever. Recreational and cultural facilities and events have become more numerous and Sundre now boasts a swimming pool and fitness centre, a very busy arts centre, a new school, and a new community services building and library. An adult-living condo complex, Sundre's first multi-story building, was built several years ago; another was under construction in 2008 and there are plans for other multi-family dwellings.

But back in 1950, the Village of Sundre was taking its first tentative steps towards the modern age. Its residents felt the stirrings of change, and soon they would begin to play an even more important role in the shaping of Sundre's future.

Dates of Local Significance 1950 - 2007

1950	Sundre reaches status of Village Rod Macleod becomes first Mayor of Sundre Elks Club formed Fire Department formed		Alberta's 75 th Anniversary Hagen Manor opened Sundre Senior Citizen's Recreation Centre opened Construction began on dykes beside Red Deer River
1951	1 st Curling Rink built		
1952	East-west runway built on land purchased by Jack Morgan Severe flooding hits Sundre		New 1050 GPM single stage pumper for Fire Department
1953	Sundre Theatre built	1981	Sundre's 25 th Anniversary as a Town
1954	E.W. Miller School built Sundre's first major oil boom began	1982	First Ambulance Service
1955	First Lutheran Service held in Sundre Women's Institute Hall Royal Purple formed Sundre Hotel built	1983	Official Opening of Pioneer Place October 15, 1983 Construction began on a new 60' x 120' Town Shop Sunshine Day Care Centre opened its doors
1956	Sundre Incorporated as a Town First Town Council elected		New Club House and Pro Shop for Sundre Golf Club
1957	Sundre 4H Beef Club organized	1984	Dickson Dam officially opened July 12, 1984 Pioneer Museum barn and blacksmith shop constructed
1959	New concrete span bridge opened	1985	Official opening of Sundre Airport
1960	Sundre Round Up started - Feb 4 th saw first edition Old ironspan bridge demolished	1986	Caroline Gas Field discovered Sundre Pioneer Historical Village and Museum officially opened
1961	First meeting of the Catholic Women's League Natural Gas installed in Sundre	1987	New Curling Rink officially opened Sunpine began operation
1965	Dr. Alan White arrives in Sundre Major flooding hits the community	1988	Greenwood Family Physicians opened
1966	Sundre Golf Course opened	1992	Search and Rescue Group established
1967	Sundre Hospital Auxiliary formed Sundre women march on Didsbury RCMP detachment established	1993	Myron Thompson elected as Reform MP for the Wild Rose Constituency
1968	Sundre and Dist. Historical Society registered	1998	Chinook's Edge School Board established
1968	Hospital opened its doors	1999	Sundre Theatre burned to the ground Old Curling Rink demolished
1970	Anglican Church established	2005	Major flooding occurs in Sundre and area
1971	Agricultural Society formed	2006	New River Valley School built Sundre's 50 th Anniversary as a Town
1972	Sundre Arena completed Sundre Lions Club initiated Sundre "Fish Ponds" developed	2007	New Library opens Sundre Community Centre opens
1974	Early Childhood Services (ECS) begin in Sundre	2009	100 years since Sundre was founded by N.T. Hagen
1980	Minimum wage increased from \$3 to \$3.50 per hour		

Sundre Becomes A Designated Village in 1950

Rod Macleod Was First Mayor

In 1948 Sundre had a population of between one hundred fifty and two hundred people and was part of the Municipality of Waterloo. There were no real streets at that time and no bylaws relating to development control. Houses just sprang up at random on properties that, for the most part, had never been properly surveyed.

A group of businessmen, concerned for Sundre's future, held a meeting to discuss the possibility of changing Sundre's status from a hamlet to a village. This was achieved early in 1950 and two councillors, Sundre's first school principal, John Weir, and Chester Mjolsness, co-owner of the Mjolsness Brothers Sawmill and future co-founder of the Spray Lakes Sawmill, chose the first mayor, Sundre businessman, Rod Macleod, on February 2, 1950 at the Village's first Council Meeting at the Women's Institute Hall. For a year after this, Village Council Meetings were held in the office at Sundre Motors and at various times were also held in the back of Rod Mcleods Red and White Store. On March 19, 1951, Council held its first meeting on its own premises. The Village Hall was a 16' x 34' building that was located on the site the present Town Office occupies in 2008.

Things changed slowly at first: There wasn't a lot of money available for improvements and boosting the coffers of the new municipality became one of the council's first priorities. A series of bylaws were introduced over the next few months of 1950 that addressed some of the most critical issues facing the village. More were added as the years passed and as Sundre grew into a town.

Some of Sundre's First Bylaws

The first Sundre bylaw was passed on February 23rd, 1950. Bylaw #1 concerned the regulation of the "moving, erection, or structural alteration of buildings within the village."

At this time in Sundre's history, homes and buildings were often moved into the community from other locations. A development permit cost a lowly fifty cents! The penalty for infraction of this bylaw was harsh for the times - one hundred dollars or up to sixty days in "gaol".

Wallace Savage was the first Secretary-Treasurer, officially engaged by the village, in Bylaw #2.

Bylaw #3 enacted the inspection of dairies. This was the first bylaw initiated to protect public health.

A "person tax" bylaw was passed on March 23, 1950. Bylaw #4 reads: "the Council of the Village of Sundre hereby enacts that a Minimum Tax of Four Dollars be levied on all persons resident in the Village of Sundre of the full age of twenty-one years, who has resided therein for a period of sixty days or more during any calendar year and is gainfully employed."

Bylaw #5 cemented the first property tax authorization and Bylaw #6 provided for a penalty on arrears of property taxes. The penalty was set at five per cent for each year the taxes remained unpaid. However, on a brighter note, according to Bylaw #7, those who paid their property taxes within 30 days of receiving the tax notice received a ten per cent discount!

Bylaw #9, September 23, 1950, enacts the appointment of Mr. W.H. Silvester to the position of Secretary-Treasurer.

Bylaw #10 marks a significant event for residents by approving the granting of a franchise to Calgary Power to supply electricity to Sundre. Prior to this, the Sundre Power Cooperative, working with a local power plant housed at Sundre Motors, provided electricity for the town. According to the bylaw, signed in April 1951, the domestic power rate was set at a \$3.30 per month basic charge (with a discount of .30c for prompt payment!) This basic charge included payment for electrical energy consumed up to the first twenty kilowatt-hours per month. Additional consumption would be charged at the rate of .02c per KW hour. Connection charges for new consumers were set at \$1.00. Alas, those who didn't pay their bill and had their service disconnected, faced a reconnection charge of a hefty six dollars.

Authority to purchase debentures for a fire truck was given in Bylaw #21, dated September 14, 1953. The amount borrowed was \$6,000.00 and repayment was over five years at three per cent interest. On the same day, Bylaw #22, authorizing the borrowing of \$5,000.00 for the construction of a fire hall, was passed.

Trades, businesses and professions were first taxed in Sundre in April, 1954. Depending on the type of business, Bylaw #25 authorized assessment of between 10c and \$10.00 per square foot. Doctors' offices would certainly have been considered

high maintenance in those days as they had the maximum assessment rate.

Residents of Sundre who kept goats, sheep, cattle, horses, mules, pigs and chickens were likely to have their livestock impounded if the critters were found to be running at large. *Bylaw #26* authorized the appointment of a pound keeper in order to care for these wayward beasts while the owner fixed his fences and saved up for the fine.

As mentioned earlier, buildings were sometimes brought to Sundre from other communities. Often, with the buildings came the transfer of taxes owing at previous locations. It appears from several bylaws passed in the 1950's that this problem was often solved by Sundre Council deeming the taxes "uncollectible" and removing them from the tax roll! Dog owners didn't come off quite so well: According to *Bylaw #32*, in March 1955 it cost \$2.00 a year to license a male or spayed female dog and \$5.00 to license a female that was un-spayed. Considering that in 2007 there is no charge for licences for owners of new puppies; new residents with dogs; or residents who apply for a licence renewal in January of each year, well, obviously, not everything was better in the "good old days"!

Rod Macleod would remain as Sundre's mayor for almost ten years, guiding the community through the hectic years following the first major oil discovery and through the first four years following Sundre's incorporation as a Town in 1956.

Fire Protection Available in 1950

Ed Halvorson was First Fire Chief

At the time the Sundre Fire Department was initiated in 1950, there were six volunteer members on Chief Ed Halvorson's first fire crew. They were Jack McGonigal, Alf English, Steve Stevenson, Allan Frizzell, George Savage and Randy Christopher. Volunteer Firemen employed locally were allowed to leave their posts immediately in response to a fire call. All the firemen of 1950 were also charter Elks members and were given permission to leave a Lodge meeting without formality if the siren sounded.

The Fire Department started out with one old fire truck, but in September 1953, Village Council

passed a bylaw authorizing the purchase of six thousand dollars in debentures for the purpose of buying a new one. In October 1954, Fire Chief Halvorson was given the special duty of flying down to Stratford, Ontario, and driving back a brand new red fire truck on behalf of his employer, Sundre Motors Ltd., and the Fire Department. Village Council also approved the building of a fire hall in September 1953, with a bylaw granting authorization to borrow five thousand dollars for this purpose. The Fire Hall was roughly located where the present Fire hall is today

The Fire Department was at first responsible for fire protection in Sundre only and did not expand to include the rural areas until around 1976, when the Rural Fire Association purchased a truck and joined forces with the town. A radio system was also introduced at this time, allowing trucks to communicate with base - enhancing the efficiency of the service and providing an extra measure of safety for the volunteers.

With plans to build a new Town Office complex in the late 1970's the original Fire Hall was demolished. While the Town building, which included a new fire hall, was under construction, fire service related vehicles were housed inside the Sundre Arena during the summer months. During the winter, they were located inside a vacant building in SW Sundre that used to be Bredin's Welding Shop before being taken over by Alberta Environment to allow for the construction of dykes along the Red Deer River. Once construction was completed on the new Town Office and Fire Hall in 1980, the fire trucks and equipment were moved into their new home.

An extension was built onto the existing Fire Hall in 2005, along with an Ambulance Station. That same year, Sundre was hit by a devastating flood. The Sundre Volunteer Fire Department, along with several other organizations, was very involved in the evacuation and rescue operation. The professionalism and community spirit displayed by the firemen at that time will long be remembered and appreciated by area residents.

In 2007, after serving the community for fifty-seven years, the Sundre and District Fire Department has expanded from its original single truck to include a total of seven motorized fire related vehicles, plus rescue apparatus, and a total of twenty-five volunteers.

As of 2008, long time Sundre resident, John

Whitesell, has spent twenty years in the position of Volunteer Fire Chief for the Sundre Department. He has seen many changes over the years, including improvements in technology and training that have led to a more effective service overall.

Today, the Sundre and District Fire Department is overseen by the Sundre and District Fire Committee.

Sundre Fire Chiefs from 1950 - present

Ed Halvorson	1950-1965
Tom Wallace	1965-1973
Wayne Doyle	1973-1979
Alex Johnson	1979-1981
Ron Morris	1981-1988
John Whitesell	1988 - present.

A Brotherhood of Community Builders

Sundre Elks in Existence for Fifty-nine Years

The Sundre Elks Lodge came into being in Sundre on September 5, 1950. Forty-five Sundre members were present for the occasion, along with thirty-four visitors. Dominion Grand Organizer, Bro. P.A. Miquelon, installed George Lutkehaus, who at the time was co-owner of the Sundre Feed Mill, as the community's first Exalted Ruler.

For their meetings, the BPO Elks Lodge #338, rented a building on the east side of the Sundre Bridge. It was originally a garage, built by Arie Vooy's and Al Scarlett in 1941/42, and at the time the Elks rented it was still owned by the Vooy's family.

The Elks' first project after installation was to repair the outdoor skating rink, located near the creamery, and to run it for a year. In addition, they bought twenty-four hockey sticks and donated them to the school for student use at the rink. At Christmas the Elks distributed hampers to the needy and continued this practice for many years. These early Elks were dedicated community builders and their enthusiasm for the job led them into some interesting fund-raising projects. One in particular involved assisting the local W.I. in a pre-

sentation of Joseph Kesselring's classic farce, "Arsenic and Old Lace". Some of the men accepted acting roles in the play and their antics certainly added to the success of the venture. From the proceeds of this presentation, the W.I. and the Elks Lodge made donations to the Curling Club, the School Fair and the Library.

In addition to donating money to worthy local causes, Elks members would sometimes help individuals in need. This might involve helping with the stooking when a farm family was short of manpower, or repairing homes for those unable to do it themselves, either physically or financially. The Lodge also organized many fun events in the community.

Like many of Sundre's early buildings, the one rented by the Elks on the east side of town could be a pretty frigid place in the depths of winter, despite all efforts to keep the wood heater running at full throttle. Mice were also a constant problem. The Elks began to look around for a new place to call home and soon agreed to fix up the upstairs section of the original Curling Rink, in exchange for using it as their Lodge. This worked well for a while, but the Elks did return to the old theatre building after having a new floor installed.

In 1955, the Elks asked Mrs. Martha Rankin, a Royal Purple member of the Olds Lodge, to form a Royal Purple Lodge in Sundre. She became the first Honoured Royal Lady to serve this community.

In 1962, the Elks began sponsoring a Christmas dinner for people who would otherwise be alone. Forty-five people enjoyed a hearty feast at the Sundre Hotel that first year. The Elks continued the annual tradition through several decades. It continues today through the sponsorship of churches and other local organizations.

The next milestone for the local Elks Lodge was when they built a permanent home for themselves in 1964. The sod-turning ceremony took place on September 5th, fourteen years to the day since the installation of the lodge. Funds for the 40 x 80 foot building were raised by the sale of \$100 debentures as well as through a cattle scheme the Elks had operated for many years. The members completed most of the construction work themselves, with support and financial assistance from the Royal Purple Ladies. The first major function to be held at the hall was a New Years dance in 1965.

The Elks and Royal Purple nationwide contribute financially to a fund which is utilized to assist

children with health needs whose families are experiencing financial difficulty. On May 14th, 1980, deafness detection and stuttering programs were added to this program fund. Many local children and their families have benefited from these initiatives.

The Sundre Elks celebrated their 50th Anniversary in September 2000. This special event was acknowledged with a gala evening, attended by the Grand Exalted Ruler of Canada and many other dignitaries and guests.

The hall built by the local Elks in '64 continues to be home for the Lodge and the Royal Purple, and while many of the original Elks members have passed on, the legacy of their commitment to the organization and to the community is continued through the allegiance of the present day membership.



Ground Breaking Ceremony for the Sundre Elks Hall. *Photo courtesy of Alvin (Johnny) Johnston & Sundre Round Up Archives*



Elks, Royal Purple Members & Dignitaries at the Ground Breaking Ceremony. *Photo courtesy of Alvin (Johnny) Johnston & Sundre Round Up Archives*

Sundre Business Advertisers in 1951

Red & White Store (John & Rod Macleod)
Sundre Theatre (Dan Sandulak)
Sundre Creamery (Reg Morris)
Sundre Hardware (Bob Rankin)
Sundre Contracting (Nate Ellithorpe, Jack Morgan, John Macleod)
Valdez Bros Service Station
Red Head Service
Valley Service (Welding)
Sundre Bakery (George Savage)
Knott's Trading Post (Ed & Betty Knott)
Vennard's Store (Everett & Rose Vennard)
Red & White Meat Services (Livestock Dealers)
Corner Service
Burke's Hardware (Dave & Phyllis Burke)
Sundre Motors (Jack & Trevor Morgan)
Sundre Shoe Shop (Don Cook)
Lund's Jewellery (Louis & Mary Lund)
Elliott's Taxi
Nichol Jackson (Livestock Dealer)
L.T. Sarles Real Estate Agent
Clover Valley Milk (Jack McGonigal)
Bank of Montreal (2 days per week)
Sundre Hotel
Sundre Cafe
East End Coffee Shop
Short Stop Service
Vicki's Beauty Salon

Taking to the Skies in the Early Fifties

The Birth of Aviation in Sundre

Although aviation first came into the Sundre area in the 1930's, WWII interrupted local flying activities and they would not resume in any notable way until 1951, when Jack Morgan purchased a new Cessna 172B CF-FBN for his business use. At that time, Jack did not fly his own plane. In fact, although the plane had dual controls, he never considered testing his skills. At forty years of age, he considered himself too old to learn to fly. He was quite content to let Charlie Hodges, formerly of Olds, fly the plane and transport him to his vari-



Sundre Elks Hall

ous destinations. Charlie, a licensed pilot and one-time mechanic for N.T. Hagen, was an employee of Sundre Motors, which Jack owned in partnership with his cousin, Trevor Morgan. In 1952, east-west and north-south runways were created on the north quarter of a half section, west of Sundre, which Jack had purchased from Trevor for this purpose. After Sundre Contracting, a company that was founded by Jack and two partners, built the airstrip, Jack built a hangar on the property for his Cessna.

Once the airstrip was registered, during the summer of 1954, a flight instructor came out from Calgary one or two days a week to instruct the people who would become the founding members of the Sundre Flying Club. An 85 hp, yellow and blue Aeronca Champ CF-FMI was used for lessons and was later purchased as the Club's first plane.

The original six members of the Sundre Flying Club were: Jack Morgan, Nate Ellithorpe, Herb Morgan, Allan Frizzell, Nels Norton, and Harold Sylvester. Each member paid \$600 for a share in the club. Flying lessons were offered at 4.00 per hour.

The flying club members built a second hangar to house the Aeronca. It was located just to the east of Jack's hangar. Later, Ernie Slang, Terry Anderson, Stan Burrell and others joined the club. There were frequent visitors and among them were Charlie Hodges and a man by the name of Mel Cipperley from Olds. Charlie, who was ten years older than Jack Morgan, eventually left Sundre Motors and returned to Olds, and Jack took the bull by the horns and learned to fly his own plane – keeping up his pilot's license until well into his senior years. The first "Flying Farmers of Alberta Fly In" to the Sundre Airport occurred in 1955.

In later years, due to the development of adjacent operations, the airstrip got shortened. Bert Caveny, who was manager of Calgary Power in Sundre and also Mayor of Sundre for a time, kept the strip graded and picked up any rocks. When two plane crashes occurred within a short period of time due to the shorter strip, Syd Vollmin, who was Councilor for Division Five of the County of Mountain View, went to Jack Morgan requesting permission to grade an additional north-south airstrip on the west side of the same half section. Mr. Morgan agreed to this.

This airstrip served Sundre for several years. However, badger and gopher holes, combined

with the inevitable ruts and potholes, made the runway dangerous. Mr. Vollmin requested a chip and seal oil surface for the strip from Alberta Transportation. His request was denied and the landing strip remained hazardous, especially since it ran parallel to the public road and power lines! During a later conversation between Mr. Vollmin and a young engineer from Alberta Transportation, who landed during a fly-in, it was suggested the Alberta Government was interested in an airport in the Sundre area. This gentleman recommended an application for a provincial airstrip with lights.

Subsequently Mr. Vollmin met with members, including Mr. Braconnier and Mr. Morgan, for further discussions. Mr. Braconnier was personally acquainted with the Minister of Highways, Mr. Henry Kroeger, and set up a meeting. Mr. Kroeger was very helpful, giving advice on how to complete the application and making himself available for any assistance that might be required. Plans for a new airport began. In the meantime, Marvin Moore became Minister for Highways. Stephen Stiles, who was the local MLA at that time, provided good representation for the rural area and pitched in to help get the airport project off the ground. Harry Protopapus was the local District Government Engineer and Syd Vollmin was elected to the position of County Reeve. Every time Syd went to Edmonton to discuss grants for bridges and roads, he would ask about the progress of the Sundre Airport plans.

Marvin Moore's Executive Assistant was related to local pilot, Dale Trottier. According to some reports, this relationship proved to be very beneficial to the Sundre Airport for after only a short time in his position, the minister surprised Mr. Vollmin by informing him the County of Mountain View would indeed be granted a paved airstrip on a half section of Crown Land, directly south of the existing strip. Discussions proceeded between representatives from the Town of Sundre and the County of Mountain View regarding ownership and operation of the new airstrip. The Town of Sundre requested a user-pay system for upkeep. To some, this did not appear to be a feasible system and County Councilor, Ken Turnbull, made a motion that the County be the sole owner/operator of the airstrip. This motion was carried unanimously. Therefore the Airport remains the property of the County and its ratepayers. The official opening of the new facility took place on September 1, 1985, with MLA Stephen Stiles and the

Honourable Marvin Moore leading the ceremonies. Mr. Braconnier later stated that he believed this new airport was the last provincial airport funded by the Lougheed Government.

Later that same year, on November 26, the Sundre Flying Club was incorporated as an Alberta Non-Profit Society under the official name of Mountain View Pilots & Flying Association.

In 1986, a Mountain View County bylaw established Sundre Airport Committee, (SAC), made up of five volunteers and appointed by Mountain View County Council and Administration, to manage the airport. Fifteen years later, in 2001, Mountain View County purchased the Sundre Airport land from the Alberta Government.

Airport archives give special mention not only to the early members who got things off the ground, so to speak, but also to those who followed and brought about the changes which led to safer and more modern services. Jerry Graves is given credit for initiating the plans that led to the construction of a terminal building: Jerry had a dream of starting a charter service in Sundre. He suggested applying for a \$25,000 government grant to be used to build a terminal. This was done and the grant was approved. Many people donated labour and expertise to bring about the completion of this project. It is believed Mr. Graves also played a role in the development of the weather station at the airport. Archives also give credit to Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Goodwin for their many years of commitment to the success of the Sundre Airport.

Over the years, many other people have contributed to the success of the Sundre Airport. From the day in 1951, when Jack Morgan set things in motion, to the present time, the dedication of flying club members has been a consistent source of energy and creativity in the growth and sustainability of this local facility. On the wall of the airport terminal building is a gilt-framed document commemorating the airport's first major contributor. It reads:

"Morgan Field:

This landing field is named Morgan Field as a dedication to John (Jack) Edwin Morgan for his contribution in providing the County of Mountain View and the Sundre Area with an airport from 1954-1985. With deepest appreciation. Reeve: Sydney Vollmin. Mayor: Sam Campkin"



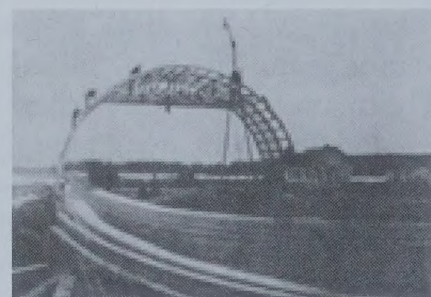
Herb Morgan with Jack Morgan's Plane.

Photo courtesy of Sundre Airport archives

Bringing Home the Rocks

Sundre's First Curling Rink

In the 1940's, Rose and Everett Vennard, and other local curling enthusiasts, made good use of the Eagle Hill Curling Rink for their winter pastime, but Sundre's population was growing and the resident curlers started discussing the need for a rink in Sundre. A committee was formed to promote and oversee this goal and members began to solicit donations to the building project. Like all major projects, it took time to gather enough funds, but by 1951 the Sundre Curling Rink, equipped with natural ice, opened its doors. Nichol Jackson was one of the club's charter members. Rose became the club's first secretary and her mom, Alice Ellithorpe, was also very involved. In 1962/63, when artificial ice was installed, Alice, by then well into her senior years, was amongst the volunteers hauling cement in wheelbarrows to cover up the pipes.



Construction of the First Curling Rink in 1950/1951.

-Photo courtesy of Kay Teather

Once the rink was operational, membership increased and a long and successful future seemed assured. Unfortunately, there were incidents in the following years that at first appeared to threaten the thriving club. Among these was a fire that destroyed the roof and front of the original building. Happily, insurance coverage provided the funds for the installation of a new metal roof and a few additional improvements.

Belford Rushka, who with his wife, Luellea, moved to Sundre in 1969 from Yarbo, Saskatchewan, and some years later operated the Howdy Drive-In, was caretaker at the curling rink between 1982 and 1984. He has several funny stories to relate, but there is one in particular that stands out in



The Old Rink is Demolished in 1999. *Photo courtesy of Sundre Round Up archives*

his mind: At that time, the Sundre High School curriculum included curling as part of its physical education program, and grade eleven and twelve students used to make use of the curling rink a couple of times

a week. On one occasion, Belford left the rink to go for lunch, leaving a teacher and some students on the ice. When he returned a short time later, the teacher was laid out on a bench, fast asleep, and the students were having a great time winging curling rocks at each other from both ends of the ice!

The rink served the curling club for well over thirty-five years before a decision was made to work towards replacing it with a better facility. In 1987 the new rink was opened. The original building was purchased by the Mountain View School Division and utilized for a number of school related activities. It also served as a youth drop-in centre for a while and was used for a variety of community events, but the building was eventually deemed unsafe and it was demolished in October 1999.

Hello – Hello

Bringing Telephone Services to Sundre and Area

Alberta Government Telephones installed the first phone lines in the Sundre area in the 1940s after the Harmattan-Sundre Mutual Telephone Service was initiated in 1936. Harmattan had its first telephone exchange in 1910, and it was the forerunner of the Harmattan-Sundre Mutual.

At first, there were only four Sundre subscribers to the Mutual, but this number soon grew to eighteen and then twenty-four, at which time AGT installed a second line. Several Sundre businesses subscribed to the telephone service but by the early 1950s the demand was growing, and those to the north and west of the village began to discuss the possibility of having a phone service operating out of Sundre that would serve their needs.

Sundre district farmers organized the Sundre Mutual Telephone Company at a meeting at the community's first curling rink on July 3rd, 1951. Mayor Rod Macleod chaired the meeting and Mr. J.R. Jackson acted as secretary.

It was established that thirty poles per mile would be needed to install telephone services. Wire would cost fifty-one dollars per mile plus six dollars for insulators and side brackets per mile. Second hand telephone sets could be purchased for around fifteen dollars.

Mr. Jack Wiper, who represented the Harmattan-Sundre Mutual Telephone Company, explained the operation of telephone mutuals and answered questions from the floor.

A board of directors was elected and was as follows: Oscar Wirsig, Nichol Jackson, Mrs. Roy Bliss, Art Eskesen and Edward Pekse. The new company would install a telephone central in Sundre.

Those in attendance at the meeting anticipated there would be an overlap of services as a result of the Harmattan Mutual already extending into the village and serving 13 subscribers, most of which were local businesses. It was decided that those subscribers would no longer be part of the Harmattan Mutual but would be served by the Sundre Mutual and Alberta Government Telephone (AGT) once the central was installed. However, the boundary conflict between the two companies would mean those subscribers east of Sundre would have to call through the Olds exchange to

reach Sundre and this would result in long distance charges of ten cents per call in addition to basic charges. Those residing in Sundre and to the north and west would pay only a monthly flat rate fee for the use of the local central exchange. It was hoped that once this situation was brought to the attention of the proper authorities it could be straightened out to the satisfaction of all concerned.

Fifty names had already been gathered from north and west of Sundre from those interested in having telephone service to their homes. South of Sundre, there had been little interest in a phone service and it seemed likely that this area would not have a circuit installed, at least not then.

Mr. Wiper informed those present that twenty subscribers was the maximum that could be handled by each line circuit.

The newly formed Sundre Mutual Telephone Company arranged further meetings in order to plan the actual installation and operation and to seek approval from the provincial government.

It was suggested that monthly rates for Sundre subscribers would be in the region of \$2.50. Grounded lines and barbed wire lines would not be acceptable for the new central hookups, and phones would not be available unless the subscriber was a shareholder in the newly formed telephone mutual.

For some years the telephone exchange was based at the home of Alvina Johnston, which was just north of the present Town of Sundre Office. All calls had to be directed through this exchange and at first the subscribers phone numbers were very simple. For example, in 1960, Burke's Hardware had the phone number "1", Knott's Trading Post was number "14" and Sundre Motors was number "80". Each subscriber was a member of a "party line" and could only call out or receive calls if other party members were not using the phone. The way to establish if the phone line was in use was to pick up the receiver and listen for conversation. For the most part, people were careful not to discuss personal matters on a party line! Each subscriber to a party line had a distinct ring that alerted him or her when they had an incoming call. However, there were often three or four families or businesses on a party line, so they also heard everyone else's rings too, which could be very intrusive and annoying. Party lines still existed in the rural areas well into the 1980s.

Following a great deal of pressure from the Sundre Chamber of Commerce, a microwave sys-

tem connecting the village with Olds was installed by the AGT in 1954.

Until a few years before this there was only one rural line from Olds with about forty phones on it, many of them businesses. The new equipment, located on what would become the Leussink farm, east of Sundre, served the town for many years until eventually a buried cable was installed. Sundre was one of the first Alberta communities served with underground lines.

In 1989, a new AGT Building was constructed. There were 2,461 local subscribers by that time, an increase of more than 100 per cent over the previous fifteen years. This building was eventually taken over by the Sundre Round Up.

Having access to telephone services back in the 1940s and 1950s was considered a major milestone for the community. It meant businesses could stay in touch with customers and suppliers, and residents could summon help quickly in an emergency situation, as well as keep in daily contact with friends and family.

In 2008 we take reliable telephone service for granted and use it to make almost instant connections to people and places around the globe. We also use our phones to send faxes and access the Internet. We have options like call forwarding and conference calling, as well as the ability to leave detailed messages. The introduction of cellular phones has given us the freedom to make calls from wherever we happen to be – on the road or on the beach - which, along with laptop computers and wireless Internet, has changed almost every aspect of how we communicate with each other and how we do business.

A Condensed History of Telephone Services in Alberta

- 1885 First phone call made in Alberta between Fort Edmonton and the St. Albert Mission.
- 1887 First long distance call in Alberta made between Edmonton and Battleford, Saskatchewan.
- 1906 Alberta Government Telephones (AGT) began operations after the provincial government acquired the Alberta Assets of the Bell Telephone Company.
- 1928 First overseas long distance call made from Alberta.
- 1967 First touch-tone service introduced in

Western Canada.

- 1990 TELUS established after reorganization of the AGT Commission.
- 1992 North America's first digital cellular network launched.
- 1995 Consumer Internet service launched.

The Floods of Nineteen Fifty-Two

Sundre Residents Marooned When Bridge Approach Knocked Out

By the 1950's, flooding on the Red Deer River was somewhat less common than it had been early in the century, so when the big one hit in June, 1952, the swollen river's destructive power came as a shock to those who were too young to remember similar catastrophes. A prolonged period of rain, combined with rapid snowmelt in the mountains, had pressured area creeks and rivers until, finally, they could no longer contain the roaring and rapidly rising water. The banks crumbled and dissolved; the water first oozed and then gushed overtop, finding its way steadily into all the low-lying areas. It rushed on its way, consuming roads and inundating homes and businesses in its path. Shrubs and trees, uprooted and sucked into the heave and pitch of the swollen river, rolled furiously downstream amidst the flotsam collected from miles of upriver back yards and backwoods.

The flooding was continuous for the best part of a week. Many rural area bridges and roads became inaccessible and the situation showed no sign of improvement. Then, on the morning of Wednesday, June twenty-fifth, the out of control river washed out the eastern approach of the iron span Red Deer River Bridge, built in the frigid winter of 1915/1916. As a result of the wash out, the village of Sundre was suddenly marooned, with no link to the larger centres it depended on for supplies and services. A pair of hydro poles was hastily thrown against the washout and a temporary approach was constructed for use by emergency vehicles and those providing essential services.

Two days later, on Friday, June twenty-seventh, the district engineer from Red Deer instructed contractors to dump rocks into the hole left behind



1952 Flooding in East Sundre. *Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum & Gary Vooy's*

by the washout. Almost fifty truckloads of rocks were excavated from Snake Hill and dumped into the void, without any visible signs of where they had gone. The attempt was finally abandoned and



Building a New Approach to the Sundre Bridge Following the Flood in 1952.

Photo courtesy of Helen Morgan

the community eagerly awaited the arrival of Mr. G.A. Guest, a provincial bridge inspector. By the evening of the 27th, he brought in the Jim Sellers bridge crew from Drumheller and construction began immediately. The crew erected a wooden ap-

proach span and on June 30th traffic was flowing freely again. By mid-July, all rivers and creeks were back to normal levels and most roads were operational again.

When Hollywood Came to Sundre

Theatre Opened in 1953

The first official movie theatre to provide entertainment for Sundre area residents was built in 1953. Operated by Dan Sandulak on the corner of Main Avenue and 2nd Street SW, over its forty-five year lifetime, the theatre showed more than

2,100 films. However, it was fourteen years earlier, in 1939 that consistent reel-to-reel entertainment began in Sundre.

Rose Ellithorpe, only seventeen or eighteen years old at the time, was asked by Ernie Bird if she would run the 16mm projector he had purchased. Rose agreed to this and the movies were shown at Hagen Hall, which, coincidentally, was roughly located where the Sundre Theatre was built in later years. An old tractor powered a small electric plant, which ran the projector.

In a 1944 edition of the school newspaper, the Sundre Hi-Lite, Jimmy Gastle contributed an article calling for a new hall, based on the condition of the Hagen Hall at that time:

"The floor is not level and it is full of large cracks. The roof leaks all over when it rains. The seats become very uncomfortable after one has sat on them for a while. During a dance, the building sways. It is nearly impossible to get it warm in cold weather."

There were many trials and tribulations related to the theatre venture: Film breaks were common and sometimes, to Rose's dismay, the rolled film flew apart and launched itself all over the projection room! Rose's boyfriend, Everett Vennard, was in charge of the box office and he had to refund admission fees quite frequently! Admission at that time was around thirty-five cents and, by popular demand, almost all the movies were westerns.

Because the hall was very cold in the winter, it was Everett's job to go there early in the evenings and light the woodstoves. Working at Knott's Trading Post at the time, Everett would run all the way into town at six, light the stoves, and hope the place would be warm enough at seven to provide a cosy welcome for the many patrons.

Apparently, people came from far and wide for the shows. Jim Vinson, from Bearberry, would pack his wagon box with movie fans and drive them to and from the show every week. Attendance was so constant and well attended that Everett and Rose decided to extend the showings to three nights a week instead of the original two.

Eventually, Everett and Rose, who married in 1943, purchased the equipment from Mr. Bird and continued to provide movie entertainment to packed houses until after the war. As the Hagen Hall began to deteriorate, they showed movies at the Sundre School.

When they built and opened a store in 1947, the Vennards sold the movie business to Mr. Dan

Sandulak, a local teacher, and his wife Ruth. Hagen Hall was in very poor shape by this time and had been condemned. Dan began to run the movies from a little building, originally a garage owned by Arie Vooy's, that was situated across the bridge on the east side of the community. This building still stands as part of Sundre Glass and Mirror. Some of Sundre's older residents still refer to this building as "the old theatre". The Sundre Elks also rented the old garage, prior to building their own hall, and it was also used as a dance hall for a while.



**The Garage Originally Owned by Arie Vooy's
During a Sundre Flood**

In 1951, Mr. Sandulak sold the theatre business to Mr. Roy Bayrak, the son-in-law of Mr. W.J. Cheladyn, who was the proprietor of the Mayfair Theatre in Olds. Plans were put in place to build a hall to serve as a theatre on land once owned by "Aunt Jean" and "Uncle Alf" Mjolsness, roughly located close to the site of Hagen Hall, which had been destroyed by fire in 1948. This building became the Sundre Theatre and is said to have been operated by the Sandulaks.

In 1954, the building was sold to Jack Morgan. The story goes that Jack used a 1953 Oldsmobile as a down payment on the property! Mr. and Mrs. Sandulak continued to run the place until 1955, when Don Morgan and his son, Rechter became the operators.

In 1957, the theatre was sold to the Christopher family. They added living quarters on the west side of the building and for ten years ran the theatre on a full time basis.

By 1966, in another deal involving Jack Morgan, the theatre changed hands again, this time coming under the ownership of Bob Error.

Bob ran daily performances at 8:00 pm, Monday through Saturday, and also a matinee on Saturday afternoons. Prices for admission at that time were seventy-five cents for adults and fifty cents for children. Popcorn sold at ten cents a bag. That same year, Marcella Burkholder became a partner in the ownership of the theatre. She remembers how popular the wilderness documentaries were, especially since some of them featured local residents, including the late Hanne Christiansen, Phil Temple and Clarence "Cougar" Long. There were often so many people lined up for admittance to the shows that some had to be turned away.

The old 16mm projector served the community well for more than twenty-five years, but, in 1968, Leonard Rushka produced a 35mm model and brought it, along with his skills as a projectionist, to the Sundre Theatre. Improvements were made to the theatre at this time, under the direction of Sheilagh McKechnie, wife of local pharmacist Archie McKechnie. Padded seats were very much appreciated by the patrons, as was the new paint job and attractive new curtain.

During the period when Mrs. Burkholder was a partner with Bob Error, Mickey Glenn ran a barbershop from the adjoining quarters. The living quarters also provided accommodation for a variety of Sundre residents at one time or another – among them Ken and Hazel Smith and a couple who ran the Sundre Hotel Cafe.

Marcella had a good relationship with her business partner, but what she really wanted was to be sole owner of the facility. There are still persistent rumours that this came about as the result of a poker game! Marcella contends that this was not the case, and that what really happened was that Bob expressed an interest in selling his shares and she made arrangements to buy him out. By 1970, Marcella's dream was realized and she became sole owner of the theatre. None-the-less, for years afterwards, Marcella was still being congratulated on her "lucky hand"!

In 1973, two modern projectors were purchased, allowing the theatre to show all the up to date and popular movies. Special provincial training was required for the operation of these projectors and a few local residents took the course. As a result of this, Len Rushka, Dave Groom and Jim Packer all helped out in the projection booth. Occasionally, Marcella's husband, Don, helped out too.

A crying room was provided for parents with very young children. Here they could watch the movie without having to worry that a fussy baby was disturbing the other patrons.

In the mid seventies George Pusey purchased the theatre building and, with his family, lived in the accommodation that had been built onto the side of the structure. The Pusey family made many improvements to the building. These included a new Tudor style facelift to the exterior, which besides making the building more appealing to moviegoers, was an attractive addition to Sundre's downtown core. Additionally, George's son, Tim, operated a clothing store from a building the family constructed on the south side of the theatre.

The Pusey's cats were quite prolific when it came to their ability for reproduction, and while, for many families, finding homes for a litter of kittens could be quite a problem, for the Pusey family it was a piece of cake. Once the kittens were old enough, George's wife, Madonna, conveniently placed them in a box in the foyer of the theatre. By the time all the patrons left the building after the show, the kittens were all on their way to new homes!

After Madonna Pusey passed away in 1988, George and Tim, along with the Pusey's other son, Chris, continued to run the theatre, but in 1996 the decision was made to sell. Michael and Barb Zimmerman, who had returned to Sundre after an absence of many years, became the new owners, with Tim Pusey's son, Corey, as their projectionist. Michael also ran the projection booth from time to time but those were invariably the nights when the projector malfunctioned and so he was more than happy to have someone else do it! Kelly Pusey, Tim's wife, along with Barb, ran the ticket sales and concession booth.

After three years, the Zimmermans decided the expenses involved in running the theatre were too steep to make the business a profitable one; home videos had changed the face of family entertainment, and staying home to watch a movie became more popular than going out to watch one. For many small town movie houses, this was the beginning of the end. The Zimmermans believe that this trend marked a negative change in family and social values, but they are grateful they had the opportunity to be part of the days when "going to the movies" was often a family affair, always looked forward to with growing excitement as the titles of the new shows were posted in the marquee

each week.

In 1999, the ownership of the Sundre Theatre passed to Shelley Erickson and Cindy Robinson-Berger, but its forty-six years of providing entertainment for the community was over: Instead of being operated as a theatre, it would be converted to an office complex.



The Sundre Theatre Shortly After its Last Performance.

Photo courtesy of Sundre Round Up archives

Sometimes plans often don't materialize in the way they were intended: Two months of work had already taken place on the conversion of the theatre when in the middle of a June night in 1999, a fire broke out that would soon spread to engulf and completely destroy the building. More than two-dozen firefighters from Sundre and Olds fought the blaze for nine hours. But it was too late and the focus was turned to the imminent danger posed to adjacent businesses, which included the Sundre Liquor Store and Smart's Trophies. The firemen worked long and hard and successfully prevented further disaster. Although arson investigators and dogs were brought to the scene following the fire, a cause was never found.

The Sundre theatre was an important part of the town's history. It had entertained several



Forty-six Years After it was Built, the Sundre Theatre Burned to the Ground. *Photo courtesy of Calgary Herald archives*



The Old Vooy's Garage Still Exists Within the Walls of the Updated Building. Presently it is Home to Sundre Glass & Mirror

generations of Sundre youngsters and families. It was a landmark for many in the area and its loss was met with considerable regret throughout the extended community.

The Vintage Square complex, built by the two ladies who purchased the theatre from the Zimmermans, now occupies the site where the old theatre stood for nearly half a century.

Dedicated Business People Help Grow the Community

The Formation of the Sundre Chamber Of Commerce

Rod Macleod, owner of the Red & White Store and Mayor of Sundre, and businesswoman Muriel Eskrick, who co-founded the Sundre Round Up in 1960, were among the first Sundre business people to be part of the Sundre Chamber of Commerce. Sundre Motors co-owner, Trevor Morgan was also a very dedicated early Chamber member, as, in later years, was Chris Marfleet, long time principal of the Sundre schools

The Sundre Chamber of Commerce held its organizational meeting in 1953. At first, it was a loosely organized group, made up of local businessmen and women who came together when needed to discuss matters pertaining to the development and promotion of the village/town. But despite its humble beginnings, the group can be credited with the foresight and subsequent dedication that went into bringing a hospital to Sundre. In this, the Chamber proved to be a powerful and

committed lobby group on the community's behalf. The need to bring a paved road from Olds to Sundre was also of great concern to local businessmen and Rod Macleod, who was also a member of the Olds Chamber of Commerce, was able to lobby for this from both ends of the highway, so to speak.

The need for a hospital in Sundre was first discussed at the Chamber's inaugural 1953 meeting, and as the community grew and the need became even more apparent, the group worked tirelessly to this end. By the early sixties, Len Rushka, who had purchased the Sundre Round Up from Muriel Eskrick, joined the Chamber. Around the same time, in 1962, Sundre's first pharmacist, Archie McKechnie, arrived in Sundre as a direct result of advertising by Chamber members. Some chamber meetings were poorly attended at that time, with only two or three members showing up, but when the agenda included matters that were vital to the town, local business people took up the community baton and the meetings were attended by thirty or forty members.

Archie McKechnie became very active in the Chamber, and along with his fellow businessmen, was instrumental in bringing Doctor Alan White and family to the community in 1965. Having a permanent physician providing services was a condition set by the authorities in order to give consideration for a hospital in Sundre.

Once Dr. White's practice was established, the fight to bring a hospital to the town heated up considerably. Many people from the Chamber, and the general community devoted long hours to the cause. Rod Macleod headed up the Chamber committee for this project and was joined by Muriel Eskrick, Archie McKechnie and Trevor Morgan. By 1968, after fifteen years of negotiation and effort, the community had its hospital.

Sundre Chamber helped lead the way in bringing full electricity services, and also natural gas to the town during the fifties and sixties respectively.

Bert Caveny, who served as Mayor of Sundre for a time, and who was also manager of the local Calgary Power office, served on the Chamber executive for a number of years, as both Secretary and Chairman.

In 1983, the Sundre and District Chamber of Commerce and the Town of Sundre officially opened Sundre's upgraded municipal campground on the banks of the Red Deer River. The property had operated as a campground from

1968, when the land had been purchased from Jack and Lillian McGonigal when they moved north of town following the 1965 floods. Then, several years after animal trainer Russ Greenwood left Sundre and dykes had been constructed along the riverbanks, the Town acquired the property where Mr. Greenwood had lived, along with other land, and this was added to the campground property. The grand opening was to commemorate the renaming of the combined properties to "Greenwood Park Campground", in honour of Mr. Greenwood. The event was a huge success with the Town supplying the beef for the celebration and the Chamber supplying salads and beverages. Neil Vanderzwan was Mayor of Sundre at this time. Greenwood Park is owned and operated by the Town of Sundre.

In fifty-five years, the Sundre and District Chamber of Commerce has grown from a membership of just a few local business people to sixty-eight members in 2007.

The Chamber continues to be a vital link between local businesses, the municipality and the residents of the community. The Chamber initiated the Sundre Visitor Information Centre and the group continues to manage it. Several local events, including Super Sunday and Sundown in Sundre, are also Chamber initiatives. In more recent years, the Chamber introduced the annual Red Deer River Festival, a two day event held on the August long weekend. The organization also organizes and hosts the Sundre Rodeo Parade and co-hosts the Community Awards program. In 2008, the Chamber is reintroducing the Sundre Trade Fair, which will be held in conjunction with SPOG Neighbourhood Days on September 12th. The President of the Sundre and District Chamber of Commerce in 2008 is Jim Eklund.



Sundre Visitor Information Centre

The Birth of the Oil and Gas Industry

Seeds of Prosperity Lay Dormant Until 1950s Discovery



*Unloading oil well equipment at Olds for
old Monarch well at Rock Cut.*

Crews Unload Monarch Oil Well Equipment From a
Train in Olds for Transportation by Team and Wagon to Rock Cut.

Photo courtesy of the Glenbow Museum in Calgary

Although it would be the 1950's before serious oil and gas development led to growth and prosperity for the little settlement of Sundre, exploration began much earlier. Monarch Drilling drilled wells at Coal Camp and at Hunter Valley in the 1930's. At the time of the Coal Camp project there was great excitement in the community, and some individuals invested in the industry, hoping for a good return. Unfortunately, the well was dry, except for a small amount of gas, which was enough to provide lighting at the well site. However, legend has it that right around that time, people downstream of the rig witnessed substantial amounts of crude oil floating down the river. No doubt this caused considerable jubilation for those who had been daring enough to speculate on the project. How thoroughly their hopes must have been dashed when they learned, so the story

goes, that somebody had dumped many barrels of crude into the Big Red in order to boost confidence in the company.

The Hunter Valley location also resulted in a dry hole and two more wells drilled in the Bear berry area in 1938/39 and 1942 were disappointing too.

The first major oil find around Sundre occurred in the early 1950's and the first field to go into production, in 1954, was located four and a half miles north of the community. It is called the Sundre Field. The Sundre Compressor Station was installed in 1958 and was soon compressing between 2.5 and 3 million cubic feet of oil per day.

In the early years, three separate companies, Shell Oil, Hudson's Bay Oil and Gas and Home Oil, operated the field. A smaller company, Tennaco (Tennessee Gas & Oil), was involved in the very



John Morgan and Two Surveyors for the Cartier Creek Well Site.

Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum

early years of exploration and development. The three major companies drilled separately but operated in conjunction with each other. However, in 1963, the field was placed under the operation of the Hudson's Bay Oil and Gas Company Ltd. Also in 1963, a water flood injection plant was put into operation to help enhance recovery of oil from the reservoir. By 1977, fifty-two oil wells were in production in the Sundre Field.

The second field discovered was the Westward Ho Field in 1955. It went into production in the same year. In 1963, Hudson's Bay Oil and Gas took it over and a compressor station was installed. By 1977 there were thirty-nine wells in production.

The first well drilled in the Harmattan - Elkton Field was in 1956, and by 1977 there were fifty-four wells in the Harmattan area, each one approximately nine thousand feet deep. Canadian Superior did a lot of the drilling in the area. Shell Oil was the company that drilled south of the Harmattan Store in 1957. Natural Gas was produced from this area some time later.

The first natural gas well in the county was located near the Harmattan turn off on Highway 27. It was discovered by High Tower Drilling Company for Shell Canada and was the start of the Harmattan East Field. By 1962, this field came un-

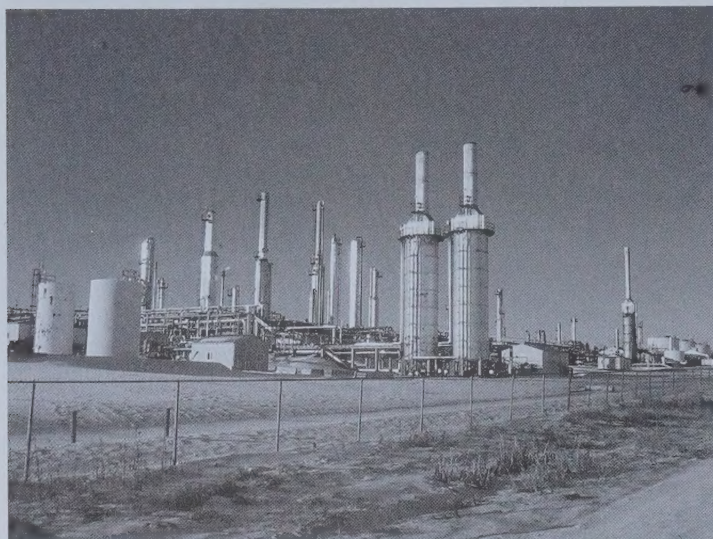
der the full control of Shell Canada.

Canadian Superior began operating the Harmattan-Elkton field in 1960, the same year that they built the early compressor station, which would eventually evolve into the Harmattan Gas Plant. Prior to this, a number of individual companies operated various wells in the area. The new plant was designed to process propane, butane, condensate, sales gas and sulphur.

The first main production line for shipping crude oil to Calgary was completed in May 1956. The Cremona Pipeline Company, which later became Home Oil Company Ltd., operated a number of pipelines in the area. By 1977, they were handling 22,700 barrels of crude oil per day, collected from the Westward Ho, Harmattan East, Harmattan-Elkton, Crossfield, Crossfield East, Garrington and Olds fields. They were also handling 20,000 barrels a day of LPG (Liquid Petroleum Gas). Natural gas produced from these fields was shipped via the Alberta Gas Trunk Line system and transported as far as Montreal in the East and California to the south.

Mobil Oil took over the Harmattan Gas Plant from Canadian Superior in the 1980s and some time later became Exxon-Mobil. In more recent times the plant was operated by SOLEX Gas Pro-

cessing Corporation, and then by Taylor LP Gas. In 2007, plans were in effect for Alta Gas to take over operation of the plant by early 2008.



Built by Canadian Superior, the Harmattan Plant is now Operated by Alta Gas

A fertilizer plant, which utilized sulphur from the Harmattan Plant, began operation in 1976 under Agri-Sul Canada. Today this plant is operated by Shell-Shantz Sulphur.

In 1968, long before the discovery of the massive Swan Hills-Beaver Lake formation, which is commonly referred to as the Caroline Gas Field, the first Caroline Gas Plant was built nine miles north and one mile west of Westward Ho. The plant was built to process both sweet and sour gas from the Garrington-Viking, Garrington-Elkton and Hudson's Bay-Garrington wells.

Over the years since oil was first discovered in the Sundre area, scores of oil and gas companies have been involved in the local activities of fossil fuel extraction and processing. Hundreds of oil and gas support service companies have contributed their expertise and labour to this cause. The impacts and benefits experienced by the local and extended community have been very significant but, at first, it all seemed to be happening too fast.

The oil discovery boom of the mid 1950's resulted in a time of unprecedented growth for the village of Sundre. The community had experienced periods of moderate growth since the 1940's, but nothing compared with the surge in population that resulted from the discovery of oil. Municipal and private services and facilities at that time were inadequate to cope with the large influx of both transient workers and their families

and permanent residents, and for a while it seemed the village might be consumed by chaos: There was an increase in fights in the local beer parlour, mostly between ranchers and oil men; oil workers from out of town were sleeping in their vehicles because the hotel and boarding houses were full and they had no other choice; the village streets, little more than dirt tracks at that time, were suddenly seeing a lot more traffic and residents were seeing their community transformed from a quiet little village, filled with familiar faces, to a busy, sometimes frustratingly noisy place that at times seemed overrun by strangers.

Rod Macleod was Village Mayor during that period and under his guidance the village began to adapt to its new identity. As it did so it grew, almost overnight it seemed, into a small town. Mr. Macleod and his Council would continue to lead the community into the future after Sundre was officially designated as a town on January 1st, 1956.

There would be many positive improvements to the community over the next twenty years; more recreational facilities would be built, accommodations would increase, streets would be paved and residential and commercial development would expand considerably. After more than fifty years of just getting by, through alternating periods of decline and modest growth, Sundre at last appeared to have come into its own.

More than thirty years of moderate oil and gas development passed in the Sundre area before the community once again hit the headlines and became the focus of international oil and gas development companies. The exploration and development of the Caroline Gas Field, the biggest Canadian gas discovery since the 1970's and one of the richest projects ever, came under the operation of Shell Canada. Once again, the little Sundre community was looking at a period of unsettlement. Indeed, for many it was a time of serious concern, for the gas trapped beneath the surface of farm and ranch lands was extremely sour and deadly. Had it been a smaller find, it possibly would have been sealed and left alone, but there were such huge reserves of the gas that the export possibilities were too real to be ignored. Consequently, the planned development of the Caroline Field brought forth an outpouring of concern and opposition from the area residents, forcing the interested companies to work cooperatively with land owners and community officials in order to bring about the development. Several years of intensive

public consultation took place, leading to the setting of new industry standards in this field.

Whenever there is major change and development, there are trade offs to be made. In the case of the Caroline Gas Field development, the trade off for the adjacent communities of Sundre and



Derek at Hunter Valley.

Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum

Caroline, and for the affected residents in between, was one involving additional risk to the health and well-being of humans and livestock throughout the locality, versus increased employment, prosperity, and growth, and the assurance from the companies involved of enhanced safety and monitoring procedures. Once again, Sundre was poised on the threshold of a new era.



Walt Schrader & Ed Jeannot Near the Wooden Derek of the Cartier Creek Oil Well.

Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum

Discovering the Caroline Gas Field

Article contributed by Diana Gilbert - Shell Canada, 2005

While many people were involved in successfully finding, and later developing the Caroline Gas Field, it was the efforts of one individual championing the play who had one of the largest roles in finding the southern extension of the Beaverhill Lake Formation which eluded explorers for so many years.

In 1981, Pat Lee, a young geologist only three years out of McGill, came up with the idea which ultimately led to the discovery of the largest gas field in Western Canada in the last 20 years. Lee came up with a theoretical model that apparently could show the correspondence between seismic results and the porosity of rocks in the Beaverhill Lake Formation. When she applied her model to seismic from the Caroline area, the model suggested a porous bank edge at a depth of 3,800 metres.

Skeptics in the company questioned Lee's assumptions and her work was shelved for a few years. In the interim, two other competitors drilled dry holes on the west and east edges of the Caroline gas pool. But it wasn't until the mid 1980's that Shell acted on Lee's assertions and drilled the Caroline discovery well in 1986.

The Shell Caroline Field was discovered in February, 1986. The discovery well was located at 7-18-34-4-W5M, 6.4 kms (4 miles) S.E. of the James River Store and south of Highway 587. It was drilled by Hi Tower 18E. It is currently called Caroline Well #23 and located near Shell's South Compressor Station.

Subsequently 14 other wells were drilled. Gulf Canada drilled 8-1-36-6 and Canterra (Husky) drilled 6-2-35-5. The balance of the successful wells were drilled by Shell Canada.

The wells produced from the Swan Hills member of the Beaverhill Lake formation, which is generally found 3,600 to 3,850 metres (12,000 -12,600 feet) below surface and contains approximately 35% H₂S or sour gas.

Caroline's History

1986:	Shell discovers the Caroline gas field – the biggest in 20 years
1988/89:	Shell conducts public consultation on how to develop the field
1989:	Shell applies for regulatory per

mission to build Caroline Complex

1990: After a public hearing, Shell wins approval, August 31, and starts construction.

1991: Recruiting for employees begins

1992: Caroline gets Alberta Environmental Protection approval
Sundre Petroleum Operators Group begins operating and puts in place an emergency 1-800 number

1993: Train 1 start-up March 3 – Well #6 first well started
Train 2 start-up May 5

1994: Pipeline leak, clean up and remediation

1995: Plant turnaround corrects technical difficulties
Performance tests show extra plant capacity
Shell applies to lower stack temperature

1996: Shell obtains approval to lower stack temperature
Shell applies to process more gas, and participates in a hearing
Met commitment for Caroline Livestock Study, study taken over by Sundre Petroleum Operators Group

1997: Shell obtains approval to process 15% more gas
Shell participates in a Interrogatory Process
Second Plant turnaround improves performance
Sundre Petroleum Operators Group holds communication workshop. Result is 13 community members representing geographical areas joining SPOG.

1996-99: Workover wells in Caroline field and put in bigger tubing to increase production.

1998: Celebrated 5th Anniversary with Public Open House and Tour

2001: Drill replacement well at 7-30-35-5-W5M to replace #3 that had watered out

2002: Shut down Liquid Acceleration Project and workover Well #13 to

change from injection to producing well

2003: Two-stage Central Compressor station to increase production.
Hosted 10-Year Anniversary of the Shell Caroline Plant

2004: Two-stage South Compressor to increase production

2005: Built Limestone/Caroline Interconnect pipeline to tie Limestone field to Caroline Plant.



The Caroline Gas Plant at Sunset

Note of Interest:

Shell had its origins in 1833, when Marcus Samuel started a business in a small shop in London's east end. He called it The Shell Shop because the most lucrative aspect of his business in antiques, curios and bric-a-brac was sales of the exotic seashells he imported from the orient and used to adorn the decorative boxes and bowls then popular in Victorian parlours.

The trade in shells became so profitable that he arranged for regular shipments from the Far East. This developed into a thriving general import and export business. By the time Samuel died in 1870, the business was enormously successful, and was continued by his sons, Marcus and Samuel, who formed the Marcus Samuel Company in London, and the Samuel Samuel Company in Japan.

Shell's first foray into the oil industry came in 1878 when Marcus Samuel (the son) began handling consignments of cased kerosene, then the top-selling fuel in the world. Then in 1890, on the way to a buying trip near Batum on the Black Sea, he noticed the harbour at Constantinople (now Istanbul) was jammed with tanker ships loading oil. He realized

there was more money in oil than in seashells, so he ordered construction of eight tankers. The rest, as they say, is history.

From Cattle Rustling to Identity Theft

The History of Policing in Sundre

Over a period of a hundred years, very few things have stayed the same: Motorized vehicles have taken the place of the team and wagon; electricity and natural gas have replaced oil lamps and wood cook-stoves; television has eliminated many of the card parties and family sing-songs around the piano, and fashions have changed so many times that they have occasionally come full circle. Likewise, the nature of crime has changed a great deal too. It used to be that one of the main sources of anxiety for settler families was the possibility of loss of livestock to a cattle rustler, and one of the biggest headaches for law enforcement officers was the illegal production of moonshine. Today, people worry about the loss of their personal identity through the theft of credit cards, social insurance numbers and drivers licenses, and the police are kept busy busting marijuana grow ops and dealing with the illegal drug trade in general.

Prior to the 1950's, law enforcement in Sundre was somewhat of a hit and miss affair. Not that the community was in need of constant monitoring, it was a long stretch from being a den of criminal activity. However, in the very early days, the district certainly had its share of cattle rustlers, gunslingers and outlaws on the run from the USA authorities. There wasn't an awful lot that could be done about it: The North West Mounted Police, established in 1873 and forerunner of the RCMP, had their hands full with the burgeoning illegal whiskey trade and the maintenance of order on the new frontier. They couldn't be everywhere at once and while they certainly would have made regular forays into the west country around Sundre, for there were many illicit moonshine operations hidden in the hills during prohibition, they were not a constant presence. Consequently, it is very likely that vigilante ranchers took action against cattle rustlers and common crooks at least as often as law officers did. Though the focus of

crime changed over the decades leading up to the 1950's, probably the incidence of criminal acts didn't increase an awful lot. The vast majority of people were law-abiding citizens and crimes were rare enough that very few people thought it necessary to lock their doors when away from home or the doors of their vehicles while they did their grocery shopping.

By the 1950's, big changes were taking place in Sundre and district. Sizable deposits of oil had been discovered in the area and a large influx of transient workers were flooding into the village and putting considerable stress on available accommodations and services - not to mention the effect they were having on the local young men, who suddenly found themselves in competition for the affections of Sundre's single female population. Liquor laws had been relaxed a little by then and on any given Friday or Saturday night at the bar of the Sundre Hotel, tempers often rose in direct correlation to the amount of liquor consumed. Brawls between local men and oil and gas workers were commonplace, as were fights between transients. Also, the community was changing in a very significant way. While there were many positive aspects to the transformation brought about by the arrival of the oil and gas industry, the community needed time to adjust and there was initially a period of tension, which possibly served to further inflame the situation between the locals and the "outsiders".

The topic of local police protection was first discussed in Sundre at an annual meeting of the Village Council in February 1952, but it was two years before Council made a decision to hire a part-time constable. In the meantime officers from Olds responded to any situations that arose in the Sundre area. Council advertised in the Olds Gazette in October of 1954 and shortly thereafter hired a man by the name of Mr. Dick. Mr. Dick served in the capacity of constable until resigning in January 1956. At that time, a Mr. Crawford was hired as a temporary Special Constable until a replacement, in the form of a Mr. Fred Bainton, was hired in June of that year.

In 1956, the population of Sundre had increased to such an extent that the village qualified for designation as a town.

The Town of Sundre purchased two used jail cells for two hundred and twenty-five dollars each from the Village of Carstairs. In 1957 Council

approved the purchase of a timing device to catch speeders and various road traffic signs to encourage drivers to obey the local traffic laws.

The wages of the Special Constable had been set in 1956 at a dollar an hour for police duties and fifty cents an hour for jailor's fees. The jailor's fees were increased in 1957 to seventy-five cents an hour. By 1959, special rates of two dollars an hour were paid if the constable had to guard a prisoner on Christmas Eve.

Mr. Bainton wore several hats; he was known as the Town's Special Constable, Public Welfare Officer, Child Welfare Officer and the Probation Officer. This proved to a bigger workload than he had wanted and in 1959 he asked to be released from his duties. He would later become Police Chief for what was then the Municipal District of Mountain View.



Special Constable Fred Bainton in 1956. *Photo courtesy of Sundre Round Up archives*

A gentleman by the name of Mr. Mackenzie became the new Town Constable and one of the first suggestions he made was that a curfew be enforced on the young people of the community. Town Council unanimously approved the constable's recommendation and youth curfews have been approved intermittently ever since.

In 1964, the Town of Sundre hired Jim Horvath as its new Town Constable.

The nature of the Town of Sundre Police Service changed quite drastically upon the arrival of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in 1967. Corporal L. Wells, along with his wife and two children moved here from Olds and took up residence in the Sundre Apartment Block. Within ten days, Constable Bob Newman joined the newly formed detachment.

The first order of business was a community-wide "check stop", where vehicles were stopped at random and checked for faulty brakes and lighting. At the same time, a warning was issued to residents to be on the lookout for counterfeit

five-dollar bills that were being circulated in the area.

The detachment was at first housed at the Town Office but in 1972 a new detachment building was built on 6th Avenue NE.

Even with an RCMP presence in the community, the Town continued to employ a Special Constable during many of the ensuing years and this individual would often work in cooperation with the Mounties.

In the 1980's, Special Constable Arthur Smith, an ex-serviceman, originally from England, was already a well-known figure in town through his connection with the Sundre Legion. As he became familiar with his new job with the Town, he took to parking his police vehicle in the shadows of a building on the east side of the Sundre Bridge, close to the intersection with the Bergen Road. The teenagers in the area, some of whom were often pulled over by Art for speeding and stunting, took no time at all to figure out where the constable's favourite parking spot was. Pretty soon they decided to make it official. In large bold letters, on the side of the adjacent building, a sign was painted by some of the youths. It read "Art's Hiding Place", and although it certainly could have been considered an act of mischief, for the most part it caused a considerable amount of humour amongst residents. Art, who is known for his dry sense of humour, probably had a secret chuckle about it too! The graffiti remained in place for quite some time and Special Constable Smith continued to park right below it!

The Town has employed several other Special Constables over the decades since the 1950's, some serving for only a short time, others staying on the job for longer periods. In recent years, the title of this position was changed to that of Bylaw Officer, and duties have changed appropriately. After several years on the job, the Bylaw Officer in 2008, Lavar Adams, formerly a City Policeman in



Corporal L. Wells in 1967. *Photo courtesy of Sundre Round Up archives*

Calgary, continues to ticket offenders and provide added security for the Town. It's not always an easy job, but at least, thanks to the ongoing presence of the Sundre RCMP Detachment, it no longer involves babysitting inebriated prisoners throughout Christmas Eve and Christmas Morning!

The Sundre RCMP Detachment became busier as Sundre's population increased and tourism and recreational pursuits brought many more visitors into the area. Until recently, the detachment's authority extended northwest to the Village of Caroline, as well as covering a vast rural area west of Sundre. A shortage of members was an intermittent concern for Town Council and for the detachment.

In January 2007, the Village of Caroline was taken over by the Rocky Mountain House Constabulary, allowing local officers to focus on the more immediate Sundre area. With an official force of eight members in May 2007, this change of jurisdiction has allowed for greater emphasis on drug related enforcement and drug abuse education and has resulted in stronger presence within the community.



Sundre RCMP Detachment in 2007

Faith Lutheran Church Fifty Years of God's Blessings

by Marie Sihlis, 2005

"Like the proverbial mustard seed, Faith Lutheran Church had small beginnings but grew to a full-blossomed tree.

No Lutheran congregation was present in the

Sundre district when the Eskesen family moved here in 1946. It was Christmas, 1955 when Mrs. Anna Eskesen felt there should be an opportunity to worship the Lord at this season, so she requested Pastor Archie Morck, of St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Olds, to hold a service in Sundre. Consequently, on December 25, in the evening, Pastor Morck conducted a Christmas service in the Sundre Women's Institute Hall. Twenty people attended this service.

From then on, services were held on a monthly basis or more frequently. A Sunday School was established and a ladies group formed which did a great deal to assist with expenses. In 1959, the Waterside schoolhouse was purchased with donations from enthused members. In 1960, the congregation was formally established, a courageous step for the small group. When deciding a name for the congregation, Mrs. Ragna Wright said, "We will need a lot of faith to make a success of this venture". Hence our name, Faith Lutheran Church, was established. Soon after this, several families of the Missouri Synod from surrounding areas joined the Sundre group. Bethany Lutheran Church of Dickson assisted us in various ways.

We then became part of a two-point parish with St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Olds. Regular Sunday services have been held since that time with confirmation and other special services. The original schoolhouse was improved and enlarged in various stages. Additional property was purchased with a view to possible expansion and for parking space. A new sanctuary was constructed. A choir enhances our services from time to time and bells were installed.

With the arrival of Pastor A.V. Granberg in July 1978, we formed our own parish and he continues to serve us at the present time, 2005."

Note: Pastor Granberg passed away in 2007.

The Formation of the Royal Purple

Martha Rankin was First Royal Lady in Sundre
by Mary Lund (edited)

"The first building (rented) used as an Elks Hall was on the east side of the Sundre Bridge and also served as a dance hall and movie theatre. Today, the Sundre Glass Shop occupies this property. It

was the respective lodges' meeting place for nine years. Brother Allen Frizzell was the exalted ruler when the Royal Purple was formed in 1955. He chaired the meeting, which was well attended by the wives of the Elks. Lady Martha Rankin was chosen to be the 1st Honored Royal Lady. Thirteen other ladies were assigned to be the various officers and Lady Rankin appointed Nellie Dunwoody to be the Historian.

Lady Martha Rankin was already a member of Olds Royal Purple #113. She took out a dual membership and became known as our "Sergeant Major."

Twenty-eight charter members were signed up for the institution of Sundre Royal Purple #191, held May 6, 1955. Following the ceremony was the installation of the officers for the ensuing year.

A lodge is like the human body. The pianist is the backbone and the drill team is the ribs that hold the lodge together. It must be true of this lodge for in the 50 years of Purpledom we have always been very fortunate to have a pianist and a drill team. The three trustees from 1955 to 1988 helped to bind the backbone and ribs to form a solid lodge. In 1988, during the term of H.R.L. Muriel Noble, a change was made in the constitution resulting in the retirement of the trustees and their collars. This was a sad decision as the trustees had taken a load off the secretaries, treasurers and other officers. The trustees were responsible for the needs of the lodge and custodian's supplies. Many ladies who didn't wish to take other positions had served as trustees.

There were six lodges in District #3 in 1955. These were Camrose, Westaskiwin, Ponoka, Red Deer, Olds and Sundre. Soon Caroline was added, and Camrose and Wetaskiwin went into another district. Leslieville, Banalto and Bentley joined us, to make a total of eight lodges. In 1988-89 two lodges were disbanded, Leslieville #233 and Olds #113. Very sorry days followed these losses and those lodges are still sorely missed. Recently Ponoka has left District #3 leaving Red Deer, Banalto, Bentley, Caroline, and Sundre.

We had many good times including a play, The Valley of the Ghosts, which was presented with a cast of Elk and Royal Purple members.

The Royal Purple members also put together a cookbook. It was the first and only one of its kind.

In 1962-63 the old rented hall took on a new look. New floor, kitchen cupboards, and sheeting

up the walls, plus new gas stoves were installed. What a difference! We didn't have to take our own dishes, cutlery etc. for catering; nor contend with the mice. What a relief!

Our own hall was built in 1964 and is still used by the Elks and the Royal Purple today.

We have had eight different secretaries in the 50 years of our history and one lady has been outstanding with twelve years service. The treasurer's chair has had twelve different treasurers and one lady had served ten years.

The first Royal Purple Day Tea was in 1971. It is a tea for seniors held the first Wednesday in June. Royal Purple Day is a day on which all Royal Purple ladies do something special for awareness. On one of these occasions we had The Kitchen Band.

The first Sunday in May of each year, the Royal Purple ladies attend a district church for a church parade.

The hall has accommodated many wedding receptions, Christmas and birthday parties, elections, bingos, casinos, and funeral luncheons.

Throughout the years the lodge has assisted the Elks in providing Christmas hampers for needy families."

Note: In 2008, twenty-four year local member, Brenda Johnston, accepted the highest possible position on a national level, that of President and Supreme Honoured Royal Lady. To the pride of the local O.O.R.P. Lodge, Brenda will travel extensively across Canada promoting the organization.

More than Half a Century of Serving the Public Sundre Hotel a Local Landmark

The Sundre Hotel has been in operation in the same location for well over half a century. The land on which it was built once housed Sundre's first cafe, built by Ellis and Thelma Sheets in 1932. Across the road from the cafe was the Sundre Garage, owned by Chris Sheets and later run by Hugh Pearce. It was located close to where Sundre Men's Wear is today. When Hugh had a disagreement with his landlord, Tilford Hagen, he purchased land from the Sheets family, close to where

the old cafe had been, and began to build his own garage.

Hugh sold this unfinished replacement building to Jack Morgan in 1941, when he realized the restrictions brought about by WWII would prohibit the installation of gasoline pumps.

Jack built a small coffee shop in the N.E. corner of the building and rented it to the couple affectionately remembered as "Aunt Jean" and "Uncle Alf" Mjolsness. In 1944, the couple purchased the building from Mr. Morgan, who is the son of early pioneer, John Morgan, added a kitchen and rooms for boarders above, and planned to develop further. They applied for a liquor license but liquor laws were still pretty tight in the middle of the twentieth century and the application was denied. Alf decided to sell the existing business, and two brothers, Hy and Alf Johnson, purchased it. Hy was an oilman and during the pair's ownership of the business, they held illegal gambling sessions in a back room. When they made application to construct a hotel, they were turned down. They in turn sold to Gordon Scott and Boomer Phillips.

The new owners hired Mart Romyn to build a new hotel. The original building was moved to the back of the lot to make way for the new. Mart had recently constructed the Sundre Motors building, kitty-corner to the hotel on the northeast side of the street. Unfortunately, Mr. Romyn passed away before completing the new hotel, with his estate

owed eighteen thousand dollars by Scott and Phillips for the work already completed. The pair was unable to settle this debt and Jack Morgan, who had kept an interested eye on the development of the property, decided something needed to be done. He invited local businessmen to join with him in a partnership that would take ownership of the hotel. Rod Macleod; Reg Morris; Nate and Bessie Ellithorpe, Everett Vennard and Joe Heaton responded to Jack's invitation, and Sundre Investments, as the group called themselves, was in business. Construction of the new hotel, along with a coffee shop, was completed and they opened on April 1, 1955 under the name of "The Sundre Hotel".

A catwalk was built between the new structure and the original building, which was situated just behind it.

1955 was the beginning of the oil and gas boom in the area and this had a significant impact on the community. Then a plebiscite was held which resulted in a beer parlour being opened in the hotel. The beer parlour often mirrored the impact of the rapid changes that were taking place in the community and consequently there were some pretty "wild" nights experienced there.

Even with the hotel open for business, the accommodation needs of an ever-increasing influx of oil and gas workers was not met, and it was quite common to find men sleeping in their cars.

The first manager of the new hotel didn't last



The Sundre Hotel in 1962. *Photo courtesy of Mary Lund*

very long, but according to Jack Morgan, his replacement, Everett Vans, ran a pretty good shop. Mr. Vans remained in his position until the mid sixties, when he was diagnosed with cancer. It was at this time that thirty-four-year-old Joe Henze took over the management of the hotel. By this time, the need for extra accommodation for transient workers had become urgent and the original rooms in the old Mjolsness building were utilized for this purpose. A pool hall, initially operated by Ernie Pearce, was set up in the old café area of that building.

Joe worked at the hotel for more than thirty-eight years before retiring in 2003. He played a key role during many of the changes and renovations that took place over the history of the hotel. In 1979, \$350,000.00 was spent on upgrading the facility. Further improvements were made in 1989 at a cost of \$200,000.00. These included expansion of the restaurant and the construction of a lounge on the north side of the restaurant.

The long-standing hotel manager was born Joachim Heinrich Henze on October 1st, 1931, in Kiel, Schleswig Holstein, Germany. His sister ran a pub and as a young man Joe sometimes helped her out in serving the patrons. It was in 1952 that Joe came to Canada and took a job on a Saskatchewan farm. From there he went into mining, first near Hinton, Alberta, and then in the Yukon. Although Joe's grasp of the English language was still very limited, he found himself being drawn back to the trade he learned in Germany from his sister. He began to wait tables in a local bar and with the direct contact this involved with the patrons, his English gradually improved. By 1957 he was running a hotel in Robb, Alberta, and four years later he moved to Canuso, Alberta, where he took over the management of the hotel there.

Speaking of his early years managing the Sundre Hotel, Joe, still a young man when he came here, says the atmosphere was rowdy, to say the least. Ranchers and farmers often locked horns with the oilmen in the area and after a few beers things could get pretty ugly. On more than one occasion when Joe attempted to keep order and intervened in a fistfight, he ended up needing stitches too!

What was known as the "two-beer policy" was in effect in the 1960s. This meant that, by law, a patron was limited to having no more than two beers on the table in front of him. Of course, this

didn't really have any impact on the amount of alcohol consumed, but Joe and his employees did their best to enforce the rule. Also in effect at that time was the law that banned women from public drinking establishments unless they were with a male escort and separate from the single male patrons. Joe found the liquor laws in place in Canada at that time to be quite archaic by European standards, but he had to abide by them. When he first arrived in Sundre, the beer parlour was not a very safe place for women, or men come to that, and he was determined to turn things around. It took ten years before he felt he had cleaned things up enough to provide a more friendly and secure atmosphere.

Joe can recall various incidents that occurred on the hotel premises over the years. One time, a female patron suffered a massive heart attack in the beer parlour and, although an ambulance was called immediately, it was not possible to save her. On a much lighter note, Halloween sometimes presented some interesting challenges for Joe and his staff: On one occasion, a live turkey was tossed through the door into the beer parlour. It provided free entertainment for a while, but eventually the unlucky bird ended up on the dinner table of a local family, with Joe and his family there to enjoy it too. A litter of piglets introduced through the main door constituted another Halloween trick that had bar staff hopping for a while. Possibly the squealing babies were too small to meet the same fate as their predecessor because, as far as we know, they did not end up on anyone's dinner table and nor do we know who was responsible for their arrival at the hotel. The turkey mystery, however, was eventually solved when, thirty years later, Joe learned that an exuberant young man by the name of Dwight Boychuck was responsible for the prank!

Christine McKinnon and her next door neighbour Annie (Wales) Dubois, served drinks to the patrons of the Sundre Hotel for a great many years. For most of those years, Joe was their boss. In fact, in 2007 Annie was still working there and did not retire until 2008, when at the age of seventy she planned to move to Saskatchewan with her husband and take ownership of a store there. At that time, she had devoted thirty years of her working life to the hotel. Chris retired from her work at the hotel at age sixty-nine, having worked there for twenty-six years.

Joe's years as manager of the hotel were very

busy ones. However, he always found time for a great deal of volunteer work in his community. He was a member of the County School Board for over twenty years and served thirty years as a volunteer fireman. He is a lifetime member of the Sundre Lions Club and in 1993-94 was the recipient of the Melvin Jones Fellowship Award for Dedicated Humanitarian Services. In the same year, he was presented with the Award of Distinction by the Hotel Association and prior to that, in 1985, he was voted Lions Club Citizen of the Year. He also received several awards during his years with the Fire Service. In 2007, Joe is entering his fourth term as a town councilor. At the age of seventy-six he appears very willing to continue serving his community. Joe is married to Karen, and is the father of four and grandfather of seven.

In 2003, Evelyn Brightman and Barb Phillips took over the management of the Sundre Hotel from Joe. For various reasons, they found they

could not continue in this shared position and after only six months, Elsie Garriott was hired for the job. According to Jack Morgan, who maintains a strong business and personal interest in the hotel, she was a great asset to the company. The renovation of the bar and the complete western-themed facelift for the outside of the hotel, instigated by Sundre Investments, both took place while she was manager. Elsie left to pursue other avenues in 2007 and was replaced by joint managers Judy Buckley and Sandy Little.

The Sundre Hotel Restaurant has seen several managers over the past fifty-four years. For the most part, it has served the community as a provider of Western/Chinese cuisine and has always been a favourite gathering place for morning and afternoon coffee.

Standing at the junction of Centre Street and Main Avenue, the Sundre Hotel is a local landmark and an important monument to Sundre's history.



The Sundre Hotel in 2007

Tony's Barber Shop

Tony Hoevers opened Sundre Barber Shop in the Sundre Hotel in 1955 and operated there for nearly thirty years.

After the Sundre Hospital was built in 1968, Tony donated one day a week to cut the hair of patients in that facility.

Mr. Hoovers retired from his hairdressing profession in 1983.

A Town is Born

Sundre Incorporated January 1, 1956

Sundre's First Town Council

Mayor:	Rod Macleod
3 yr term Councillors –	Louis Lund
	David A. Burke
2 yr term Councillors –	George Hansen
	George Savage
1 yr term Councillors –	Chester Mjolsness
	Alfred Thomas

**Note: In Sundre's early years, Council members did not automatically serve for three years, as they do now, instead, their terms of office were staggered, possibly to ensure continuity.*

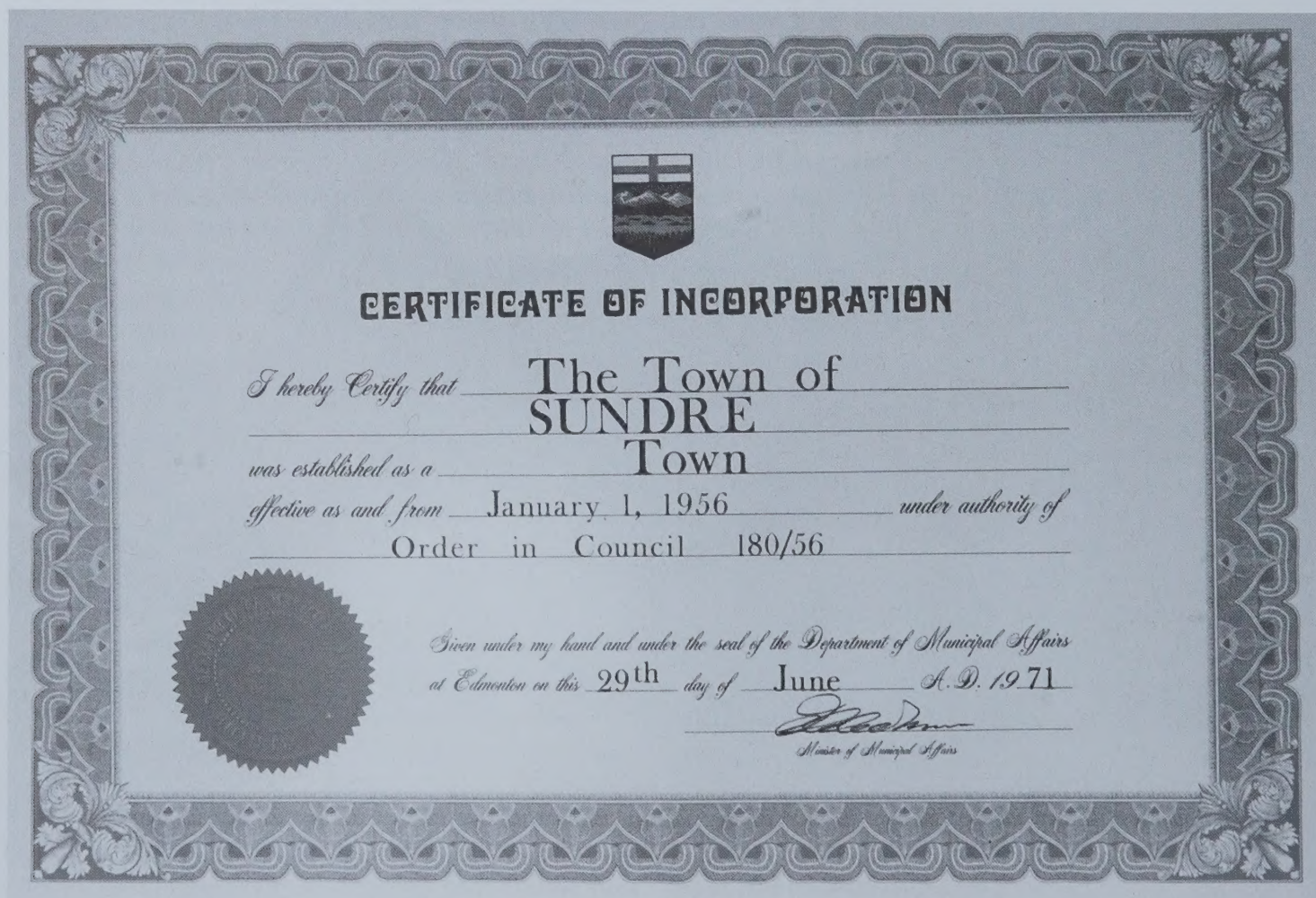
Sundre's First Council Meeting as a Town

On March 12, 1956, a Council Meeting was held at the Sundre Lumber Company Office, with Mayor and Council officially representing the community for the first time since it had been incorporated as a Town. Mayor Macleod and all councillors were present, along with Special Constable Crawford, Secretary W.H. Silvester and Mr. Morgan.

Despite its historical significance, Sundre's first Town Council Meeting was a fairly routine affair: A motion carried that would see regular Town Council Meetings held on the third Monday of each month, and then members were selected for various committees:

General Government: G. Savage; G. Hansen; A. Thomas.

Protection: A. Thomas; L. Lund; G. Savage.



Sundre Incorporated as a Town in 1956

Public Works: C.J. Mjolsness; D. Burke; L. Lund.
Social Welfare: D. Burke; G. Savage; G. Hansen.
Recreation & Community Services: L. Lund; D. Burke; C.J. Mjolsness.
Health & Sanitation: G. Hansen; C.J. Mjolsness; A.Thomas.

First, second and third reading were given to Bylaw #39, authorizing grants of \$100 to the library and the curling rink and then Sundre's first Town Council Meeting came to a close.

Some of the Town of Sundre's First Bylaws

Plans to bring a sewage disposal system to Sundre were initiated with borrowing *Bylaw #35*, in January 1956. This bylaw was followed in February of the same year with one to authorize borrowing money for a Town water system. The age of convenience was descending on the community. Trips to the outhouse, or the well, on a frigid winter morning would soon be nothing more than a memory. The pioneering era was coming to a close, and while there is no doubt its passing left a sense of nostalgia for many, the comforts of modern life would prove to be adequate compensation for most residents.

Sundre's first substantial traffic regulations document came into effect with *Bylaw #46* in October 1956. This is also when a flashing red lights was first installed at the four-way stop on Main Avenue and Centre Street.

Mobile homes were banned from Sundre with the passing of *Bylaw #51* in September 1957. Anyone violating this bylaw could be sent to a "common gaol for a period not exceeding thirty days". Happily, for the many residents who now enjoy mobile home living in Sundre, this restrictive bylaw was later replaced by one that recognized the improved construction and appearance of mobiles, and the advantages of allowing these affordable homes permanent locations in town.

Bylaw #75 would initiate Sundre's first curfew restrictions. The first part of the wording is a little strange: "No children, really, or apparently, under the age of 16 years, shall be loitering in the streets of the Town of Sundre after the hour of 10 o'clock in the evening..." Lots of kids 'apparently' had imaginary friends in those days!

A scavenging bylaw was introduced in 1960, and once again, the wording and content may bring a smile. The following excerpts are from *Bylaw #76*:

"Garbage shall mean the refuse of animal or vegetable matter except night soil, which has been used or intended to be used as food."

"All ashes will be piled in a place accessible to a mechanical loader which will be picked up once annually."

Bylaw #81 introduced the Town's first "Untidy Premises" controls and *Bylaw #82* allowed for the appointment of Sundre's first female Secretary-Treasurer in September 1960. Elizabeth M. Taylor replaced Victor Richter after he had served the Town for approximately eighteen months.

A grader was purchased in 1960 at a cost of \$4,500.00. \$3,000.00 of this was financed by a loan, approved by *Bylaw #84*, and was repayable over two years at 7% interest.

Business taxes, which had been imposed in 1954, were high, and really made things tough for local professionals and businessmen.

In September 1961, four overdue tax accounts, ranging from \$2.31 to \$304.33, were, for reasons not revealed, deemed un-collectible. *Bylaw #91* provided for these arrears to be cancelled and removed from the tax roll. It seems unlikely that unpaid taxes would be dealt with so leniently today!

The rateable assessment on all properties in the Town in 1961 was \$625,975.00. Compare this with 2005, when the total assessment, not including exempt Town properties, was \$150,819,110.00! Total debenture debt for the Town in 1961 was \$145,841.74, and on December 31, 2004, the Town's total debenture debt was \$721,375.00. Considering the massive increase in property value in the Town in those forty- three years, the debt load ratio at the early part of the twenty-first century was very small. Of course, with the recent Alberta boom and Sundre's rapid growth over these past few years, the debt load is higher today, but with new developments and much higher property values the ratio is still very favourable.

In the 1950's and 1960's, the town often had to borrow money for general administration and several bylaws reflect this need. Amounts were usually between five and twenty thousand dollars and each loan was secured by forthcoming taxes and would be paid off at tax time. Happily, this interim borrowing is not likely to be necessary today.

September 1961 brings us to the *100th Bylaw*. Arrangements were being made for a Municipal Election. Elizabeth Taylor, still Secretary-

Treasurer for the Town, was appointed as Returning Officer, and Lorraine Coutts was appointed as her Deputy.

Many more bylaws would be passed as Sundre continued to develop and modernize, but few would prove as historically significant as those passed during the first decade or so after Sundre's incorporation as a Village and then as a Town.

Looking back on those early years, one can't help but be in awe of the growth and progress that has taken place here, and of the many people who have diligently served the Town to help make it possible.

In 1960, the Town of Sundre took ownership of the land on which the present Town Office is situated and on which, according to area history books, the original Village Office, a 16' x 34' structure, was located in 1951. In 1967 renovations took place which resulted in a new Fire Hall and Police Office. The Sundre Library was located in a section of the Fire Hall for a few years.

In 1980 a brand new Town Office/Fire Hall was built. While the construction was in progress, Town staff moved into the house next door, where for several years Alvina Johnston had operated the AGT switchboard.

2008 brings in the dawn of another era for the Town of Sundre as plans are made to convert the

former Calgary Power building, on the west side of town, into a new Town Office facility.

Sundre Mayors 1950-2009

1950-1960 – Rod Macleod

Rod Macleod was Sundre's first mayor and served almost ten consecutive years in this position. Historically, these years were very significant for the community, for they represented, first, Sundre's new status as a Village, in 1950, and then, only six years later, its incorporation as a Town.

Rod Macleod, born in Glasgow, Scotland, came to Sundre with his family in 1947 from Cremona. In partnership with his brother John, he opened and ran the new Red and White Store at the corner of Main Avenue and Centre Street and lived in the house built by Fred Jeannot.

Mayor Macleod and his council did a great deal to change the face of Sundre in many different ways. Sewer and water were installed; houses and businesses on the east side of the bridge were annexed into the town; development guidelines were set up and public health bylaws were introduced. Additionally, a Town Office and Fire Hall were built and a Calgary Power franchise took over from the former Power Cooperative. It was also during



The Old Town Office in 1979, Twelve Years After the Construction of the New Fire Hall
- Photo courtesy of Town of Sundre archives

Rod's term that the old iron span bridge, built in 1915, was replaced by a concrete structure.

** Please see the history of Rod Macleod elsewhere in the book.*

1960-1963 – Louis Lund

As Sundre's second mayor, Sundre businessman, Louis Lund, had already served several years on Council and was familiar with municipal protocol and all the current issues and community improvements under discussion.

Born in Cranbrook, British Columbia, in 1922, Louis with his wife, Mary, had opened a watchmaker/jewelry business in 1949. The couple's only child, Norman, was born the same year. By the time Louis became Mayor of Sundre, the business had expanded considerably to become Lund's Jewelry and Gift Shoppe, located in a building across the street from and south of Sundre Motors. During Louis' second year as mayor, this business would be relocated on Centre Street.

The discovery of oil near Sundre in the early and mid fifties led to increased prosperity for the community that had previously struggled so hard to make ends meet. Council continued to consider and endorse improvements to the Town and during Louis' term as mayor, he saw two miles of sidewalk installed. He was also invited to attend the official opening of one of Canada's great achievements – the Trans-Canada Highway – stretching from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific, a distance of 7,821 kilometers (4,888 miles). The ceremony took place at the Rogers Pass, British Columbia, on September 3, 1962, with Prime Minister John Diefenbaker and representatives from all ten provinces in attendance.

Louis Lund started his life in Sundre in the lumber industry, as a planer, and well into his old age he continued to enjoy and expand his skills in this area, running a small mill from his Bergen area property. He was a member of Sundre's Volunteer Fire Department and enjoyed ball games, dancing and local theatre. Louis passed away in July 2007 and Mary continues to live at the senior's residence in Olds where the couple had recently made their home.

** Louis and Mary's story can be found elsewhere in this book.*

1963-1967 – Reg Morris

Reg Morris was Sundre's third mayor and had a

reputation as a good man and a great community worker. Born in Wetaskiwin, Alberta, he was one of five children in the family of Mr. and Mrs. William Morris. The couple owned a creamery but Reg decided early in life that he didn't want to enter the family business and in the early 1930s he began working as a carpenter. However, it wasn't long before he had a change of heart and followed in his father's footsteps. After working in various creameries in Alberta, and following four years in the army in WWII, he began managing the Sundre Creamery in the mid 1940s and ran it until the 70s, when it became a victim of the inevitable march of progress and was closed down.

During his term as Mayor of Sundre, Reg served on the Red Deer Regional Planning Board and felt deep regret that Sundre's growth was stunted by two factors: The first was that N.T. Hagen had died without leaving a will. The result of this was that his estate, which included a great deal of land in Sundre, had been tied up indefinitely, severely restricting Sundre's development. The other issue was flood control. Because there was none in place, frequent flooding of the Red Deer River resulted in what little land was available being unsuitable for homes and businesses.

In 1967, when Sundre opened an outdoor swimming pool as part of the Centennial Year Celebrations, Reg and Neil Vanderzwan challenged each other to a swimming race in the new pool. The event drew a lot of spectators and helped create a fun-filled day for the community.

Reg was very active in his community in numerous ways. He served as President of the Chamber of Commerce and of the Golf Club, and was a charter member of the Sundre Elks Club.

Reg and his wife, the former Janet Robertson, had four children: Ron, Marjorie, Susan and Dale.

1967-1974 – Neil Vanderzwan

Born in The Hague, Holland in 1933, Neil came to Canada with his new wife, Anne, in May 1955. He worked in various places as a baker before coming to Sundre, where in 1963 he bought the Sundre Bakery from George Savage. Mr. Savage built the original bakery in 1946, but after taking ownership, Neil replaced the building. He operated Sundre Bakery until 1977, when it was sold to Louis and Donna Kovaks.

Neil was only thirty-four years old when he became Mayor of Sundre and he remembers that there was good-humoured rivalry between himself and

Councilor Russ Matwychuk, who was of a similar age. The pair constantly bantered about who was the oldest, (if you want to know the answer, ask Russ or Neil!)

It was in the late 1960's that the Town, under the direction of Neil and his Council, purchased the balance of the N.T. Hagen Estate, for a sum of seventeen thousand dollars. The land was subdivided and lots sold for between three and eight hundred dollars each. Neil believes this move by the town had a great impact on the growth of the community.

Neil has built several houses in Sundre and he worked for ten years as Sales Manager for Sundre Motors. He and Anne are now happily retired and still enjoying the community they joined more than forty-five years ago.

1974-1977 – Bert Caveny

Bert Caveny was born in 1929 in Stavely, Alberta. His parents were Howard (from Illinois) and Pearl (from North Dakota) Caveny.

In 1956, Bert was made District Manager of the Calgary Power Office in Sundre and for twenty-one years, with his wife, Margaret and their five children, Bert made Sundre his home.

After serving on Town Council for several years, Bert decided to run for Mayor - a position he held from 1974-1977. He felt very strongly that he wanted to do what was right for the town, even if his ideas were sometimes unpopular. One of the main issues he remembers from that time was the Town's push to sub-divide land on the southwest side of the Bearberry Creek. A great deal of work was put into this project, and Bob Clark, who was MLA for the area at that time, was very helpful and supportive throughout the process. However, in the end, and much to Bert's continued disgust, the Red Deer Planning Commission turned down the sub-division application and the town was forced to lease rather than sell the lots for the much-needed mobile home development area. This situation has since been rectified.

It was around the same time that Main Avenue, west of the 4-way stop, was first paved, and Mr. Caveny remembers a cement-soil mix was used for this and that it provided an excellent surface that lasted many years.

Bert Caveny was an enthusiastic pilot and owned his own plane when the Sundre Airstrip was located closer to town, on the Sundre Contracting property. The Calgary Power Office was,

at that time, an A-frame building located north of where the Nazarene Church is located. On more than one occasion, very early in the morning, Bert would taxi his plane from the airstrip down to his office in order to perform maintenance on it. He always had someone drive in front of him to warn any oncoming traffic of his approach, and until a few local residents began to complain and he was forced to stop the practice, it worked very well for him!

Since leaving Sundre in 1977, Bert Caveny has made his home in Strathmore. He still returns to Sundre from time to time, and although he sees ongoing changes, he feels the biggest changes in Sundre's history took place in the period between the mid-fifties, with the oil boom, and the mid to late seventies. It was during those years that the installation of electricity, water and sewer, natural gas and paving took place, and increased residential development occurred.

1977-1980 – Myron Thompson

Myron Thompson was born in Monte Vista, Colorado, in 1936. Coming to Sundre with his wife, Dot and infant son, Myron D., in 1968, he joined the staff of the Sundre High School as a teacher. From 1974 he served the Town as a councillor and in 1977 was proclaimed Mayor in an election that had one of the highest voter turnouts in Sundre's history. The exciting start to his term continued as Town Council faced some important and difficult issues and decisions. Among these was the question of what to do with the \$1,000.00 per capita grant awarded to the municipality in 1978-79 by the Lougheed Provincial Government. Eventually, it was decided that the money should be spent on paving the entire town. Up until then, only Main Street had been paved, while a few other streets had been given a cold mix surface.

It was during the period that Myron was mayor that plans began to bring an ambulance service to Sundre and he was Chairman of the investigative committee that was set up by Council.

Recreation was also a major focus during Myron's term, and several new facilities were constructed, while several other venues were improved: Artificial ice was installed in the arena and new ball diamonds and tennis courts were built.

One of Myron's pet peeves, and perhaps one of the major issues which drove him to become involved in federal politics in later years, was what he saw as the soft approach of the government

towards criminal offenders in general and young offenders in particular. While serving as Mayor, he began a campaign to try and change this when he called on all mayors across Alberta to join him in putting pressure on the Federal Government for the strengthening of the Justice System. Many municipalities became involved and the campaign resulted in some significant changes in the way the courts dealt with perpetrators.

Myron made the choice to leave municipal politics just prior to the 1980 election when it became a condition of him being accepted as principal of the Sundre High School. Twelve years later he became the Wild Rose MP for the Reform Party under Preston Manning.

** Myron Thompson's story can be found elsewhere in the book.*

1980-1984 – Neil Vanderzwan (second term)

1984-1986 – Sam Campkin

Sam Campkin was into his third term on Sundre Town Council when Neil Vanderzwan found it necessary to resign from the office of Mayor and a by-election was called in order to replace him. Sam put his name forward and was acclaimed as Sundre's new Mayor in 1984.

Sam was born in Trochu, Alberta, on October 4th, 1945 to Robert William and Angelina Sophia Campkin. He was the fifth of six children born to this couple.

In 1956, Robert came to Sundre, followed by the rest of the family in 1958. Sam completed grade eight through twelve in Sundre and then began a long career in the oil and gas industry. He met Patricia Warwick, who was attending McGill University in Montreal, in 1966, while she was on holiday in Olds. On August 16th, 1968 (the day the new Sundre General Hospital was officially opened), the couple was married at the Sundre United Church.

Times were difficult for many Sundre area residents in the mid eighties as burgeoning interest rates put increasing financial pressure on homeowners and farmers. Municipal growth slowed accordingly as the boom and bust cycle, by that time a well-known facet of the Alberta economy, once again took communities into a downturn.

The Sundre Rodeo Grounds at that time were looking at future expansion requirements and Council faced the dilemma of relocating the

grounds outside of town at substantial expense, or making more land available to them in town. In the end, some land that was under consideration for residential development, something the Town was opposed to at that time, was handed over to the Rodeo and Race Committee.

The Town Sewage Lagoon was also expanded during that time and the Natural Gas Station was rebuilt. Also during this period, the Sundre Flag, designed by the grand-daughter of Councilor Bill Scott, was introduced to the community.

Sam and Patricia Campkin still make their home in Sundre and are the parents of two children, Russell, born in 1970, who recently completed a tour of duty in Afghanistan, and Paula, born in 1973.

1986-1989 – Bob McIntyre

When Bob McIntyre, born in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan in 1931, came to Sundre in 1983, he and his wife, Marilyn, opened Mountain View Cablevision. Three years later, happily settled in his new community, Bob, the father of seven children, was voted Mayor of Sundre.

The mid to late eighties were busy years for Town Council: The Caroline Gas Field had been discovered in 1986 and Shell Canada was in the process of conducting studies prior to building the Caroline Gas Plant. This huge local project resulted in a considerable amount of concern and speculation in the community, and the Town was heavily involved in providing input into Shell's decision-making process.

The upgrading of Highway 27, on the east side of the Sundre Bridge, also took place during Mayor McIntyre's term, as did the development of a new sub-division on 5th Street N.E., which is also on the east side of the bridge.

In 1992, Bob and Marilyn opened Work World, a clothing store, on Centre Street North and they have been running the business since that time. It is now called Cougar Clothing.

In 2007, Bob is once again serving his community as a member of Town Council. As in the 1980's, his involvement coincides with a period of rapid growth for the community, due this time to the oil and gas boom that has been taking place in the province for the past few years.

Bob has been an active member of the Sundre Chamber of Commerce for many years and has served as President of that organization.

1989-1995 – Terry Leslie

Terry Leslie was born in 1953 in Calgary.

The Leslie family moved around a lot during Terry's childhood, and in twelve years he attended eleven different schools. This did not deter him from pursuing a career in education and in 1980, shortly after his marriage in 1979, Terry and his new wife, Debra, both accepted employment in the County of Mountain View (now Mountain View County). Terry worked as a teacher in Sundre High School, while Debra commuted to Didsbury, where she taught for three and a half years until the birth of the couple's first child, Annalise. A second child, Christopher, was born in 1986.

It was Myron Thompson who first introduced Terry to his fellow Sundre residents, and Terry has always remembered and appreciated this. As Sundre's current mayor in 1980, Myron also had a hand in sparking Terry's interest in local politics, and the new Sundre teacher was a very young man when he first ran for Mayor of Sundre in the fall of that year. By his own admission, he was thoroughly defeated by Neil Vanderzwan, who already had local mayoral experience under his belt and was a well-known Sundre resident.

Terry was not daunted by his defeat and he went on to secure a seat on council as a result of a by-election in the mid 1980's. He served as a councillor for five years before once again throwing his hat in the mayoral race in 1989 and winning the election.

With five years on council and another six as mayor, Terry Leslie saw a lot of different issues brought to the table. The arena renovations were an ongoing source of discussion, as were the early plans for an indoor swimming pool, and also for an arts centre; the hospital was in danger of closing; the matter of Town water and sewer for the east side residents was high on the agenda. He remembers it as "a wonderful time", not without controversy, when the people of Sundre were doing what the people of Sundre do best - relentlessly going after their dreams. Terry's proudest time, though, was when the Sundre trail system was constructed, in particular, the section involving Snake Hill. There had been a proposal to develop the north side of the hill for residential use and this led to a "Save the Snake" campaign, and a petition to Council signed by the majority of Sundre residents. The "Snake" was indeed saved, and the trail system was icing on the cake. A provincial grant for \$250,000.00 had enabled the mu-

nicipality to provide walking/biking trails along the river bottom and up over the hill, tying Sundre's natural areas together and ensuring fitness and recreational opportunities for generations of residents and visitors to come.

Still living in Sundre with his wife, Debra, Terry is now Principal of Deer Meadow School in Olds. He loves the community that has been home for twenty eight years with a passion, and believes that Sundre people, with their strong sense of community and volunteerism, are the very best anywhere, bar none.

1995-2001 – Patricia Toone

Patricia Toone is the daughter of early Sundre residents and business people Bob and Martha Rankin and the wife of George Toone, who with his father, Roy, and brother, Barry, ran the Sundre Sales and Service garage for many years.

Born in 1944 in Olds, Pat came to Sundre with her family when Bob formed a partnership with John Macleod in the early fifties. She remembers her first home very well because the builder the Rankins had hired, having accepted their money, didn't honour the contract. The family was forced to live in the basement of the partially finished home for quite some time while the building was completed.

With forty years of Sundre living under her belt, Pat Toone first served her community as a member of Council in 1992. By the time she became Sundre's first and, to date, only female mayor, major changes were taking place within the Municipal Government Act. In previous years, a mayor and committee could make decisions on behalf of the Town without the input of a full council. When the Act changed, only "Council as a whole" could make decisions. Although this amendment caused considerable confusion when it was first introduced, Pat believes it was a good move overall and that, for her, it was a good time to be mayor as Municipal Affairs was conducting a variety of seminars to help councils to understand the changes.

Among the issues Council was dealing with in the mid to late 90's were those relating to the new swimming pool; the plebiscite that resulted in Snake Hill being retained as environmental reserve; the building of a footbridge over the Bearberry Creek; the annexation of land on the north side of Sundre, and the subsequent three years of work that was put into a new Municipal

Development Plan.

After serving two full terms as mayor, Pat's concern and interest in the future of the Town of Sundre remained strong, and in 2003 she once more became a member of Council. In 2007, she allowed her name to stand and residents again voted her into office, along with most other members of the previous council, ensuring a continuity that is important during Sundre's present period of growth and change.

2001-2004 – Wayne Gent

Wayne Gent is a man who has worn many hats over his working life, most of them representing his skills in carpentry and home building, consulting and design, and financial management.

Born in Estevan, Saskatchewan in 1940, Wayne married Joan Kelley in 1962. The couple's two daughters were born in Nanaimo, British Columbia, while Wayne was working there as a Mortgage Manager.

The Gents had lived in Sundre for eight years when Wayne was elected mayor in 2001. He felt very strongly about wanting to see the town become more creative, aggressive and innovative, and he had several ideas that he pursued passionately in the hopes of bringing this about, including a proposal for amalgamating with other area towns and counties in order to share resources.

Mad Cow Disease was an issue for council during the early years of the twenty-first century, as were policing matters: With the population of Sundre growing quite steadily, there were concerns that eventually the Town would have to contribute substantially to the cost of having an RCMP Detachment in town. Mayor Gent urged his Council and the townspeople to consider all the options, including the possibility of introducing a private police service. It was also while Mr. Gent was mayor that the decision was made to sell the remaining town owned development lots to a private developer. Wayne believed this was one of Council's most successful endeavors during that period.

The latter part of the 2001-2004 council term was a difficult one: Long term CAO, Harvey Doering, had suffered a serious illness and was on extended sick leave. His knowledge, expertise and guidance were greatly missed by the Mayor and Council and could not be duplicated by the presence of the temporary CAO's who were hired

in his place.

These days, Wayne Gent is still very involved in the things he loves to do: his artwork, carpentry work and his insatiable appetite for reading, especially Western Canadian history. He is very proud of the many ways he contributed to the recent building developments at the Sundre Museum. Another source of pride is that in 2002, the housing development he designed and built on Centre Street, beginning in 1995, won the Canadian Gardening National Award for Small Gardens.

Wayne and Joan Gent continue to live in Sundre, and while Wayne talks of retirement in the future, he still enjoys building homes for family and friends

2004-Present – Roy Cummings

With a long family history of employment in the electrical industry, it is perhaps not unusual that Roy Cummings sought very similar work when graduating from SAIT in Electrical Engineering Technology. Roy's father and his grandfather were both long time employees of Calgary Power Company and Roy began employment with the company at Pincher Creek in 1975.

Born in Seebe, Alberta in 1953, Roy was one of five children born to Roy and Yvonne Cummings. In the same year that he started employment with Calgary Power, he married Sandi Maloff. In 1976, their first son, Terry, was born, and in 1978, just a few weeks before the family was transferred to Sundre, a second son, Trevor, joined the family. The family was complete in 1979 when daughter, Traci, came into the world.

Roy served two terms on Town Council before running for Mayor of Sundre in 2004. At that time, with Sundre experiencing a period of exceptional growth, he felt that it was vitally important to have the proper plans in place to enable the town to grow and develop in an orderly manner. He still feels that way today and much of his first term in office was spent working with Council to this end. He admits that it has been a very challenging time, but also a very exciting one.

Sundre's present mayor believes it is very important that the community presents an attractive and modern image, so as to appeal to a greater number of potential residents and business people. One of the ways this can occur is through the physical enhancement of the downtown area,

which Roy and Council envision as being the "heart" of the community. Downtown Revitalization plans are one of the present council's priorities as they go into a new term in 2007. Although he believes change is both inevitable and welcome, Sundre's Mayor hopes the town will retain its caring, friendly character. He uses a catchphrase, "New Look - Same Great Place" to describe his vision for Sundre's future.

The flood of 2005 was a major event occurring during the term of the 2004-2007 Council. Roy believes that the Town responded very well to the disaster and feels proud that the actions it took at the time helped prevent any loss of life or serious injury. However, his most vivid memories after the fact relate to the actions of community groups and members. He highly commends Greenwood Neighbourhood Place for the way it "stepped up to the plate" and took care of the needs of so many residents looking for assistance after the flooding of their properties, and he will always remember the sight of volunteer firemen up to their waists in water as they helped residents evacuate their homes.

The Sundre Rodeo was only a week away when the floods hit the community. Many businesses were closed, the Town was on a boil water order, followed by water restrictions, and a great sense of loss and shock still prevailed. Roy feels it is a great example of the spirit of the extended community and its residents that despite the turmoil and inconveniences following the flood, the Sundre Rodeo events went ahead as planned, with many hundreds of people flocking to the community that had so recently been devastated by flooding.

To date, Roy's term as Mayor of Sundre has been an exciting one. With his council, he has seen periods of rapid growth and development, dealt with a major natural disaster and been heavily involved in the numerous plans for Sundre's future. On a personal level, however, there is sadness in regard to the death of Sundre's long term Municipal Administrator, Harvey Doering, in 2004. As a Town Councilor, Roy learned a great deal from Harvey and remembers him fondly as a good man who loved his community; who guided many town councils with his wealth of municipal experience, and who always acted in a dignified and professional manner.

In 2007, Sundre Mayor Roy Cummings was re-elected to office by acclamation, taking him and

his new council into what could possibly be one of Sundre's busiest development periods ever.

Sundre's First Female Councillor

Marcella Burkholder was the Town's first female councillor, accepting this position in 1967. Contrary to the experiences of some early female pioneers on the political scene, where the "old boys" club prevailed and many women were either ignored or ridiculed, Marcella's experience was very positive. She was accepted and respected by her fellow Council members and felt completely comfortable in her position. Marcella was also the first female member of the Sundre Hospital Board during the 1960's and became a member of the County School Board in the early 1970's. Laura Horton was another of Sundre's early female councillors.

Town of Sundre Administrators 1956-2007

1956 - Wallace Savage, W.H. Silvester

1957 - T.A. Walton

1959 - Victor E. Richter

1960 - Elizabeth Taylor

1966 - Arthur Ogden

1974 - Harvey Doering

2004 - Richard Kutt

2005 - Nita Bartholow

Harvey Doering - Town of Sundre CAO 1974-2003

Harvey Doering was born in Hanna, Alberta, on April 28, 1947. After completing a two-year course in Business Administration at S.A.I.T. in Calgary, Harvey started work as Secretary-Treasurer to the Town of Sundre in 1974. In later years, the Secretary-Treasurer title was changed to that of Chief Administrative Officer.

Harvey soon proved himself to be dedicated to his job, his town and his staff. At the same time, he was a devoted family man and an active community member.

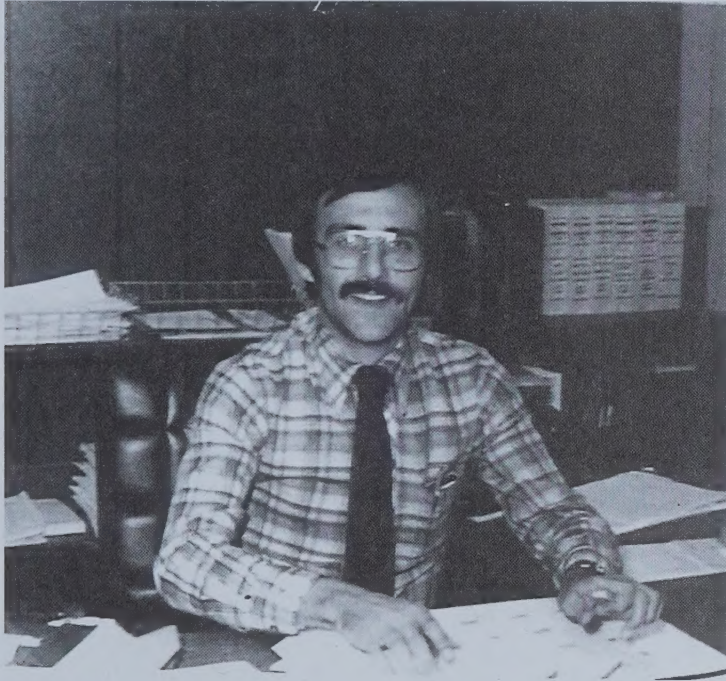
As Sundre's longest serving CAO, Harvey Doering's expertise and experience enabled him to guide ten different Town Councils through a maze of bylaws, finance, development guidelines and municipal protocol and regulation.

Harvey loved Sundre and didn't want to see it change too drastically. Throughout his almost thirty years with the Town, he was known for his careful budgeting and his desire to keep debt and taxes low. He was patient and kind with staff and resi-

dents, and could be counted on to be available even when he was at his busiest.

Many people have contributed to Sundre's history over the years and it is fitting that Harvey Doering be included amongst those who helped build and guide our community. For three of our five decades as a Town, Harvey was a conscientious and dedicated public servant who made the town's welfare his first priority.

Following a serious illness, Harvey Doering passed away on January 1, 2004.



Long Time Administrator & CAO, Harvey Doering. *Photo courtesy of Town of Sundre archives*



Arthur Ogden & His Children in 1972.
Photo courtesy of the Sundre Round Up



Nita Bartholow, Present CAO for the Town of Sundre. *Photo courtesy of the Town of Sundre*



Harvey Doering & Town Staff in 1989.
Photo courtesy of Town of Sundre archives

Sundre's Town Council in 2008

Mayor:

Roy Cummings

Councilors:

Patricia Toone

Joe Henze

Annette Clews

George Taylor

Gale Henderson White

Bob McIntyre

1.



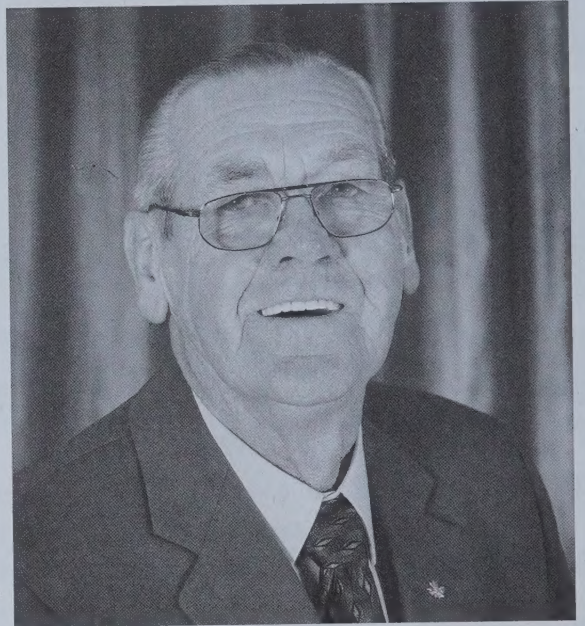
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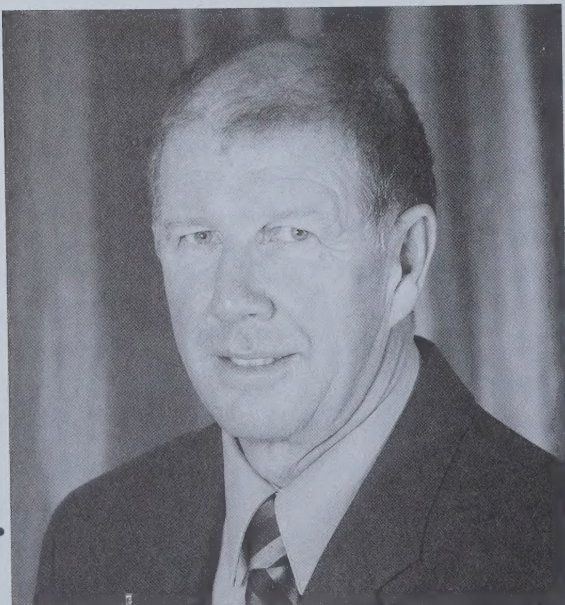
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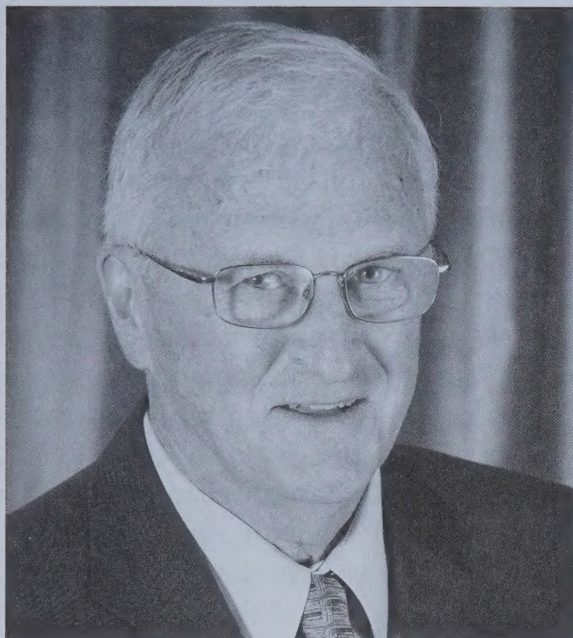
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1. Mayor Roy Cummings. 2. Councilor & Deputy Mayor Annette Clews. 3. Councilor George Taylor. 4. Councilor Patricia Toone. 5. Councilor Joe Henze. 6. Councilor Gale Henderson White. 7. Councilor Bob McIntyre



Formal Portrait of Present Town Council



Some of Sundre Town Employees in 2005
Photo Courtesy of the Sundre Round Up

The Gathering Place

Frances McKillop and the Corral Café

In the early 1930s, Ellis and Thelma Sheets, who built Sundre's first café in 1932 on the present Sundre Hotel site, had purchased a sizable amount of land from Mr. N.T. Hagen and his partner, Mr. Lee. It stretched east from the location of the café to the river. Ellis and Thelma developed this land, constructing several cabins and a building that, after moving to Calgary in 1941, they sold to Walt and Margaret Davidson, who reopened it as a butcher shop. A restaurant also began operation in this vicinity and two oriental men, affectionately known locally as Joe and Duck, took over as managers. Jack and Lillian McGonigal purchased part of the Sheet's property, including some of the cabins, and they lived there for many years.

About three years before coming to Sundre, Frances Webb began working as a cook for the M&M Farming Company, owned by Jack Morgan and Chester Mjolsness. The partners farmed a huge tract of land on an Indian reserve in Southern Alberta. Frances also cooked for the Spray Lakes Sawmill, owned by Mjolsness Brothers, for a while.

Frances was born in 1928, in Didsbury, to Elmer and Christine Hayes. Elmer ran a livery barn in Didsbury at that time, but when Frances was quite young, the family took up farming in the Fallen Timber area, where Frances attended school before transferring to a school in Didsbury, and then another in Cremona. Frances married Stanley Webb, but a few months before the birth of their first child, Joyce, Stanley passed away and his young widow was left to raise her little daughter alone.

When Frances first came to Sundre in 1949 she worked for Ed Saterswait, who by that time owned the restaurant near the butcher shop.

Eventually, the café in Sundre was sold to a Mexican gentleman known as "Poncho", and while under his ownership the building was destroyed in a fire. Poncho purchased land across from the Sundre Hotel. Here he constructed the building that was to become the Corral Café.

In 1954, Frances Webb and Peter McKillop were married. Two years later, in 1956, a year after the Sundre Hotel opened its doors, the couple purchased the property owned by Poncho, and while Peter worked the couple's Bearberry ranch,

Frances ran the café, which opened in November of that year.

The mid and late 1950s were very busy years in Sundre due to the recent oil discoveries in the area. The café attracted a great many customers and Frances frequently worked sixteen-hour shifts in order to meet the needs of the expanding community. Sometimes, as when an oil pipeline was being installed and construction crews worked night shifts, the café stayed open around the clock in order to provide meals and packed lunches for the men. Frances admits that she could have prepared the sandwiches in advance, saving herself and her staff some of the long hours of work, but she believed food should always be as fresh as possible, so as far as she was concerned, pre-wrapped lunches were not an option.

Because the Corral Café was directly across the street from the hotel and because, in those days, bar patrons were required to leave the premises by 10:00 pm, it was not unusual for the café to have rowdy customers from time to time. There were several occasions where Frances and her staff were grateful for the assistance of regular patrons, who acted as "bouncers", evicting troublesome customers from the premises. Frances remembers one occasion when a man, somewhat worse-for-wear after a night of heavy drinking, fell through a glass cabinet in the café.

Karen Leacock used to be a regular customer at the Corral Café and often met there for coffee with her friends. In those days, many people were smokers and Karen remembers an incident related to this that, while holding the potential for serious injury, turned out to be very funny: Karen had flicked her lighter and was reaching across the table to light her friend's cigarette. Just as she did this, another friend, sitting at right angles, leaned forward and her hair fell onto the flame of the lighter. The hair spray she had applied earlier immediately ignited, resulting in a halo of flames around her head. Just as this happened, Frances was walking past the table. Acting instinctively, she quickly whacked Karen's friend over the head with the menu she was carrying and successfully extinguished the fire!

During busy times on the Bearberry ranch, it was not unusual for Frances to finish work at around 4:00 pm, after putting in up to twelve hours of labour, and immediately head home to help with the baling, branding, calving – or whatever else was needed of her at the time. She was

very grateful for the excellent people who worked for her at the café over the years. Among these were, Maud Kibblewhite and Ruth Roberts, both cooks, and Ann Botham and Dolly Glosky.

Coffee sold for ten cents a cup during the time Frances had ownership of the café, and there were daily specials, which included soup, a main course and dessert. Fries and gravy at twenty-five cents was always a very popular snack item.

In the late 1950s, Frances and Pete leased the café to Marcella Burkholder, who had previously held the lease for the Sundre Hotel Restaurant. Marcella hired an Italian cook from British Columbia, Salvatore Iorio, affectionately known as "Sam" and he proved to be a real asset to the business. Marcella remembers that there were times when the café was not very busy, when the patrons were mainly farmers, cowboys and a few lumber workers, but that at other times, when a new oil rig moved into the area, things got really hectic. At these times, she and Sam were often at a loss regarding how much food to buy. There was a serious lack of accommodation for rig workers in those days, and Mrs. Burkholder remembers that local people often took them into their homes. Even so, there were still those who had no option but to sleep in their cars.

Marcella remembers Sundre in the 1950s and 1960s as being a somewhat rough town, but despite this, she fell in love with the community from the moment she set foot in it in 1958. She can still recall stopping her car at the brow of the Sundre Hill the day she moved here and stepping out to look at the view: "I got goose bumps", she said in an interview, "I knew I had found my home."

In 1960, with the Corral Café doing really well, Marcella opened a café in Red Deer, which she named "The Food Shack". She left Sam to look after the Sundre establishment while she lived in Red Deer during the week, getting the new business off the ground.

After meeting Don Burkholder, Marcella quit the café business. She and Don were married in April 1961.

In 1968, Frances and Pete sold the café to Walter Windish.

The popular eating place changed hands several more times: Three oriental men owned it for a while and called it "The White Spot". Other owners were Trudy Folland, Lyla Dean and Audrey Green. Kay and John Robinson owned the establishment for several years, renaming it "The Wagon

Wheel". Eventually, the café was closed and then reopened as a bottle depot. Some time later Craig and Maggie Lamb ran it as a flooring business. In 1998, Pat and Myrna Eddy purchased the property and the old café was removed. The Eddys' son, Nevin, and his wife, Liana set up a second hand store in a garage that was part of the property. Four years later Pat and Myrna built a new store, along with some rental office space. In 2003 Myrna took over management of the new store, Sundre New and Used. In 2007, the store was closed and Myrna opened a music store in the same complex.

In 1977, Peter McKillop passed away and, at fifty years old, Frances took on the awesome job of running the Bearberry ranch alone. Always a determined and gutsy lady, she soon proved she was up to the task. She filled long days running the tractor, picking roots, mowing hay, trailing cows and any number of other farm related chores. She was seventy-one years old when in the fall of 1999 she decided it was time to retire. Leaving the ranch in the capable hands of her granddaughter, Deanna, and Deanna's husband, Marty Ringland, Frances moved into Sundre.



The Former Corral Cafe Building Before it was Removed from the Site.

Photo courtesy of Frances McKillop

Frances remains an active community member and continues to enjoy many hobbies, including hand quilting, cooking, and cake decorating. She enjoys the close bonds with her daughter, Joyce Dreger, owner of Just Travel in Sundre, her grandchildren and great-grandchildren, and her many friends. In the summertime, she pitches a large tent in her backyard, furnishes it with table and chairs and potted plants, and invites groups

of seniors to share a meal and companionship with her.

It has been fifty-two years since Frances and Pete opened the Corral Café, and while the building is gone, there are still many people in Sundre who remember the special brand of hospitality and the friendly atmosphere of their favourite gathering place.

Boomers Beef up Membership of 4-H

Sundre Club Formed in 1957

You certainly didn't have to be a baby-boomer to join the Sundre 4-H Beef Club, founded November 5, 1957, but there was a very good chance you would be. In 1957, the hit musical, *West Side Story*, was taking the world by storm; the controversial TV series, *Peyton Place*, was attracting lots of attention, and Elvis Presley and Rock and Roll were king! The children of the community, born into an era of post war growth and increasing affluence, were starting to approach early adolescence at a time when many families had a television, a telephone *and* a car; when the first computers took up enough space to fill a small warehouse and when the introduction of AA batteries paved the way for transistor radios, remote control toys and a host of other modern inventions. At the same time, the proliferation of nuclear weapons was causing fear and concern throughout the world and American B52 bombers patrolled the skies in hopes of averting a perceived possibility of attack from the USSR. It was a time of great technological progress but also one of apprehension and uncertainty. The children who grew up in that time, while they would experience more freedom and considerably more opportunities than their parents had, would live in a world that was approaching one of the most unpredictable and frightening periods of its history.

Despite the uncertainties of the world around them, rural communities like Sundre continued to thrive and as the population grew so did the various clubs and organizations that promoted a sense of camaraderie and purpose amongst participants. In Sundre, the Elks Club and Legion were already well established and, amongst other

amenities and services, the town had a curling rink, a pool hall, a library and a fire department. The time was definitely right for the establishment of an organization specifically for the young folk. An agriculturally based club seemed a perfect choice. It would offer Sundre's expanding generation of baby boomers opportunities to gain competence and confidence in animal husbandry, leadership, creative writing, public speaking, and community service, providing them with the tools to create successful futures and strong communities.

Alberta 4-H began its history in Olds, in 1917, as a generation of children from the area's first major influx of settlers began to attend school. Forty years later, in 1957, the newly formed Sundre 4-H Beef Club, initiated by Jake Severns, welcomed more than a dozen charter members. These included Tom Willsie; Ken Walker; Anne Miller; Edward and Jack Folland; Frances Hollick; Anne Jackson; Donna Kibblewhite; Edna, Leone and Lorraine Severns; Judy and Joanne Overguard and Alistair McIntosh.

Over the years, the club has been very active and has done very well in competing with other clubs, especially within Mountain View County. Originally, the livestock competition was restricted to beef, but in more recent years equine, dairy, swine, sheep and grain have been added to the list, giving young people a broader range of choice and experience.

Public speaking has always been very important as far as 4-H is concerned, and members have been encouraged to develop confidence and skill through public speaking demonstrations and competitions. A number of Sundre and area speakers have competed as far as the Regional speak off.

Local 4-H members are involved in many community-enhancing projects; and these have included highway clean up, 4-H exchange programs, conservation camps and junior leadership seminars. Several individuals have been the recipients of special scholarships and others have attended leaders conferences and have given freely of what they learned, not only to their own club, but to other clubs as well.

May 28, 2007 saw the celebration of Sundre 4-H Beef Club's 50th Anniversary. Past leaders and members gathered with present leaders and members on Achievement Day to mark a long and successful history. Since the club's early beginnings, many members have gone on to become successful farmers and ranchers and have entered vari-

ous other careers with the confidence and skills born of their association with 4-H. The Sundre 4-H Agricultural Show and Sale continues to attract enthusiastic support from local businesses and this goes a long way in keeping the club active and successful in the community.

The 4-H Pledge

I pledge

My head to clearer thinking,

My heart to greater loyalty,

My hands to larger service,

And my health to better living,

For my club, my community, and my country.

1957 Newsmakers

When Religious Education was Still Politically Correct

Home & School Discuss Religion

Members of the Sundre Home and School Committee gathered at the school for their monthly meeting on January 29. The main topic for discussion revolved around religious education. Members saw no reason to change the Friday afternoon sessions for grades 1-9 under the leadership of the Sundre Ministerial Association. It was noted that Sundre was unique in Alberta for its successful five-year venture in this field.

Three New Town Councillors Elected

Fred Mitchell, Chester Mjolsness and F. Vennard were all elected to sit on Council in 1957. Mr. Mitchell would serve for 3 years and Mr. Mjolsness and Mr. Vennard for 1 year.

Petulant Pets?

Lots of people have worn passed-down clothing at one time or another, but in

1957 even the dogs in Sundre were wearing hand-me-downs. As a cost saving measure, Council decided that instead of issuing new dog tags, those from 1955 would be recycled instead, with the dates changed appropriately.

1960 Newsmakers

Two Historical Structures Gone Forever

Fire Destroys Historic House

In February, one of Sundre's oldest buildings went up in flames. The Miessner house, which, among other things, was operated as a rooming house, was built in 1922 by Joe Schaffer and was operated as one of Sundre's first stores.

Iron Span Bridge is No More

March of 1960 saw the dismantling of the old iron-span Red Deer River Bridge. The bridge was built in 1915-16 in weather that dropped as low as sixty degrees below zero (F). There was an earlier bridge, built in 1909, which was washed away in the flood of 1915.

Spring Arrives April 7th

A very early spring was recorded in 1960, with green grass and buds bursting on the trees on April 7.

Future Round-Up Building Opens its Doors

May 14th saw the official opening of Doug's Drive-In. In later years this build-

ing became the Sundre Round-Up office. In 1981 it was demolished to make way for The White Goose Restaurant and was re-opened as Cosmos Dining Lounge in 2003.

Liquor Store a Go

On December 6, despite much controversy, the Sundre Chamber of Commerce voted in favour of a liquor store for Sundre.

Bob Clark M.L.A.

On November 30, twenty-four year old Sundre School Phys. Ed. teacher, Bob Clark, was declared the new Social Credit M.L.A. for Didsbury.

Marketplace 1960

A Look Back on the Prices of Yesteryear

Sundre General Store – Phone Number 19

Chenille Bedspreads	-	4.98
Men's Work Socks	-	.77
Boys' Flannelette Shirts	-	.99
Box of 21 Christmas Cards	-	.49

Burke's Hardware – Phone Number 1

Electric Frying Pans	-	14.44
Electric Heating Pads	-	3.99
Eureka Vacuum	-	58.88

Sundre Motors - Phone Number 80

1959 Mercury ½ Ton	-	1,399.00
1957 Dodge Sedan	-	950.00
1960 Chevrolet Coach	-	1,595.00

Other Advertisers During this Period

Lund's Jewellery

Knott's Trading Post – Phone Number 14

Martyn Motors – Phone Number 40

Red Head Service – Phone Number 13

Sundre Bus Lines – Olds Phone Number 613 (Ran 3 times daily, 6 days a week, between Sundre and Olds.)

Sundre Hotel – Phone Number 33

Sundre Round-Up – Phone Number 60
Sundre Transport – Phone Number 53
Sundre Stock Yard – Phone Number 203
Jack's Diving Shop
Sundre Kwick Wash
Tony's Barber Shop – Phone Number 163

Local News Items During This Period

Peter Bowden Drilling is moving to a lease on Limestone Creek, North of the Red Deer River Ranger Station. Reports say Loffland Bros. and Cascade Drilling rigs will be setting up in this district.

The people of the Nazarene Church have voted to enlarge the church by 24 feet.

They expect to begin the project before winter.

Rodeo News:

Sundre's First Little Britches Rodeo.

With a full slate of events and a large group of contestants, Sundre's first "Little Britches" show was a resounding success. Local winners were:

Wild Horse Race

1st – Ed Folland,

3rd - Robert Johnson

Boys Barrel Race

1st – Ed Folland,

2nd - Delmar West,

3rd – Jerry West

Girls Barrel Race

1st – Leone Severens

Calf Scramble

2nd - Jerry West

Church Services Advertised During This Period

Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Church

Faith Lutheran Church

Sundre United Church

Sundre Tabernacle

Church of the Nazarene

Fallen Timber Four-Square Church

A Community Newspaper Since 1960

The Sundre Round Up

The first newspaper in North America was published in Boston, USA, in 1690. Today, we take our dailies and weeklies for granted; they are as much a part of our lives as automobiles, telephones and sliced bread, yet is it unlikely we have given much thought to the role these tabloids of news, information and advertising have played in the development of our local communities and in the recording of history.

There had been several newspapers in Sundre prior to 1960 and each had contributed a very necessary service to the district. Starting in the 50's, Sundre had experienced substantial growth due to the discovery of oil and gas in the area and in 1956 the village, incorporated in 1950, became a town. The Sundre Star and the Sundre News Advisor were local newspapers around this time, but both were quite short-lived publications.

The modern women's movement was in full force throughout the Western World in the 1970's. "Women's Lib" was the battle cry, and the symbolic burning of bras was taking place across Europe and North America in protest of what "libbers" saw as the restrictive and unequal position of females in modern society.

There is no doubt that this movement resulted in some very positive changes for women in general, but it is interesting to look back over the years and realize that women played pivotal roles in the shaping of society and business long before the likes of Betty Friedman, Germaine Greer or Gloria Steinem began pressing for change. Female business owners, even if in partnership with spouses, were easy to find in Sundre, going back as far as the early 1900's when Elizabeth Hagen operated the Hagen Store and the local boarding house. Mrs. Hagen was in partnership with her husband, N.T. Hagen, but her sometimes-formidable presence was a strong force in the community and was in no way diminished by the business activities of her "better half". Betty Knott, who operated Knott's Trading Post from the 1930's with her husband Ed, was an excellent businesswoman who very quickly won the hearts of her customers and of the hamlet in general. There were many other women who made an impact on the development

of Sundre, and so it is not really surprising that when the community was in need of a weekly newspaper in 1960, it would be two women who would step up to the plate.

Muriel Eskrick and Lorraine Coutts were sisters, the daughters of Robert and Violet Thompson, who moved to the Westward Ho area from Guelph, Ontario, in 1921. Muriel had a natural ability as a writer and over many years would play an important role in the recording of some of Sundre's history and also, as it happens, in the making of it. She was a strong woman and a dedicated community builder and, as one of the founding members of the Sundre Chamber of Commerce, would become involved in promoting some of Sundre's most crucial developments. But, in 1960, at the age of forty-five, it was a newspaper that was foremost in Muriel's mind and that of her sister.

Lorraine was a former employee of the Sundre Star and had considerable experience in typing up the news items and advertising displays. She continued to hone this skill in her partnership with Muriel, but Lorraine did not remain with the newspaper very long and some of her duties were taken over by Ruth Vinson.



Sundre Round Up Founder, Muriel Eskrick. Photo courtesy of the Sundre Hospital archives

A commercial artist in Calgary designed the masthead for the new newspaper and this was used in varying forms over the years.

The Round Up was first located in the office of Sundre Lumber Co., on the NW corner of the four-way stop.

The 8.5 X 14" fledgling paper was printed on a Gestetner Duplicator and then on a Multilith Duplicator, which Muriel referred to as a "Multilith Monster" due to its complicated operation.

Dan Singleton, present Editor of the Sundre Round Up, wrote the following article regarding the history of the newspaper:

"Sundre had been a town for less than five years when the Sundre Round Up weekly newspaper was started by sisters Muriel Eskrick and Lorraine Coutts in 1960.

The first edition of the Round Up came out February 4, 1960, and was printed on a hand-operated printing press. The premier edition featured front-page stories on the opening of the new session of the Alberta Legislative session, and on a local slide show called "Trooping the Colours".

A subscription to the Round Up back then was \$2.00 per year, and by 1961 the circulation was about 800 copies per week.

The first photograph was printed in the paper on July 27, 1961. It was a front-page picture of a dozen pioneers of Sundre and district. (Incidentally, the first digital photo to appear in the Round Up was a 1996 shot of Reform Party leader, Preston Manning.)

The decision to launch the Round Up was prompted by a request from the Sundre and District Chamber of Commerce for someone, anyone, to start a new publication to cover local and district happenings.

There had been a number of earlier papers in Sundre prior to 1960, including the "Sundre News Advertiser" and the "Star", both of which published briefly in the 1950s, but none were in circulation as the 1960s got underway.

Mrs. Eskrick and Mrs. Coutts reportedly chose the name the Round Up for their new paper because it reflected the western flavour of Sundre and indicated the sisters' desire to round up all the news from the district. It remains the only weekly newspaper in the world (as far as we know) with the name Round Up.

The Round up was the first newspaper venture for Mrs. Eskrick and Mrs. Coutts, and they jumped into the undertaking with a vengeance. From day one they covered everything from fires to accidents and from bake sales to community dances.

After two eventful years, the Round Up was sold to Mr. Len Rushka, who acted as both publisher and editor throughout the 1960s. In the early 1970s, Mr. Rushka took on a partner in the person of Mr. Jim Packer, who was also the printer at the newspaper.

In 1978, Mr. Bill Scott purchased Mr. Rushka's share of the paper, and in turn sold to the Leatherdale family, owners of the Olds Gazette. In the 1990s, Mr. Packer sold his shares to the Leatherdales as well.

In 1997, Ray and Joanne Lachambre, the current owners of the Round Up, purchased the paper from the Leatherdales.

From year one, the Round Up has relied on community correspondents, with weekly reports coming in from Bergen, Bearberry, Mound, Lobley, James River, Harmattan and elsewhere.

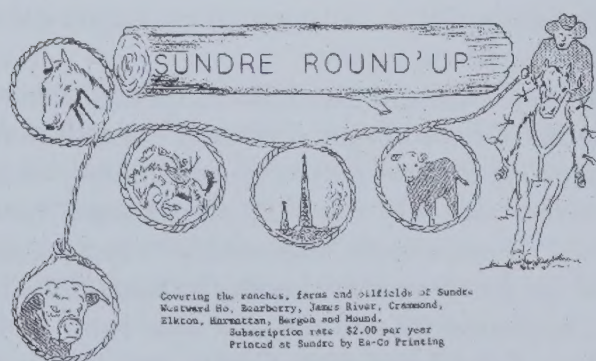
Mrs. Ferrell Haug has been the Round Up's Bergen correspondent since the first edition in 1960, making her one of the longest serving writers on any newspaper anywhere in Alberta.

"I do it because if something is written down you can bring it up in the future. If it isn't written down, it's gone," said Haug, who wrote for the Didsbury Pioneer before the Round Up started.

"I started with a story about my father-in-law, about an elk he shot when he was in his 70s."

A number of regular columnists – including Mr. Bill Hinson who wrote the "In and Out of Sundre" column, Mr. J.R. Jackson who wrote the "Vulcanus" religious column, and Mrs. Lesley Munns who wrote the "Spotlight on Sundre" feature – were also regular contributors to the paper over the years.

The newspaper – which is a member of the Alberta Weekly Newspaper Association and the Canadian Community Newspapers Association – also has a website edition which features a collection of the top stories of the week."



The Masthead of the Very First Edition of the Sundre Round Up in 1960. Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum

Mrs. Ferrell Haug retired her column in the Round Up early in 2007 at the age of eighty-nine, having served the community with local Bergen news and many interesting observations about her beloved birds for 47 years. This dedicated lady was born into the Gamble family at Nitchi Valley as the First World War began to draw to a close. In 2007 she became a resident of the Foothills Lodge.

Mrs. Lesley Munns, author of the long-standing and very popular "Spotlight on Sundre" feature, gave up her byline in the late nineties as she approached her 80th birthday. One of Sundre's war brides, she and husband, Hugh, have called Sundre home for more than forty years. Leslie is a talented writer and has been involved in the writing and editing of several locally published books.

After its original location in the Sundre Lumber Co. Offices, the Round Up moved to a building on Main Avenue West that had previously been Doug's Drive In and is now occupied by Cosmos Dining Lounge. Its next home was a little further west, where Pharmasave is now located. It was then moved to its present location, the old Alberta Government Telephones building, adjacent to Swamp Donkey's Pub.

The Round Up changed hands again in October 2005, when it came under the ownership of Mountain View Publishing. The newspaper – which is a member of the Alberta Weekly Newspaper Association and the Canadian Community Newspapers Association, also has a website edition which features a collection of the top stories of the week.

Len Rushka Discovers Sundre's Charm in the Early 'Sixties

Shortly after coming to Sundre in 1962 and purchasing the Sundre Round up from Muriel Eskrick, Len Rushka wrote an introductory editorial in that newspaper extolling the friendliness and enthusiasm of the area. The following is an excerpt from that editorial column:

"So far, we have met a goodly number of people and each and every one of them has an infectious disease – Sundre-it is; very contagious too, as after being in the town and area for the short time of only ten days, we are stricken with the symptoms.

"In all sincerity, Sundre-it is gives a newcomer in town a wonderful warm glow when meeting people who work in Sundre, live in Sundre and are proud of Sundre (and by this we definitely mean Sundre and district), and are not

afraid to voice that pride. To work with people who think, work and act in this manner... Sundre and district is full of them... will be more pleasure than work."

Sundre's Quiet Hero

Archie McKechnie

Archie Wright McKechnie was born in Lethbridge in 1933, but moved to Calgary once he had completed his schooling. While there, he spent two years working for the C.P.R. Company before enrolling in the University of Alberta, in Edmonton. Archie's dad had been a pharmacist and by the time Archie was ten years old, he had known he wanted to follow in his father's footsteps.

Following graduation with a Bachelor of Science in Pharmacy degree, Archie worked alongside his father at a Calgary pharmacy, but he later formed a partnership with a friend and they opened their own drug store. About this time, the Sundre Chamber of Commerce had made a decision to seek the services of a pharmacist for the Sundre area and three months later, at the request of Jack Morgan and chamber representative, Vic Richter, Archie agreed to fill this role. In December 1961, he had his own drug store in a new shopping centre that had been opened by Jack Morgan. Today, this store is the home of the Sears Catalogue Store and Sew Perfect.

For Sundre's newest citizen, along with his wife, the former Sheilagh Dobbyn, and young sons, Archie and Steven, their first home proved to be quite a challenge: They rented and later purchased the property from Jim Dougan, but it had stood empty for some time and there were broken windows through which pigeons had entered in order to roost in the upper levels. Rabbits had taken over the lower level of the house. The furnace belched oil periodically and it was a full time job to keep the house clean.

Dr. Chauncy Miller was Sundre's physician when the McKechnie family arrived but the closest veterinarian was in Olds. Archie soon found himself serving as an advisor on livestock treatments and medicines for the local ranchers and on several occasions he is reported to have rolled up his sleeves to assist in veterinary procedures, giving no thought to the long hours this brought to his busy day. Selfless gestures such as this en-

deared him to the local people and he soon established a loyal base of customers to his drug store that would prove to him that his move to Sundre had been the right one.

Archie joined the Chamber of Commerce and as the push continued for a hospital for the community, he took the role of Chairman of the Hospital Committee and, along with others, dedicated many hours to bringing a new doctor to Sundre after Dr. Miller's retirement and to promoting the cause for the hospital. In 1967, after Dr. Alan White became established, Archie was part of a committee, serving with Dr. White, Muriel Eskrick, Rod Macleod and Trevor Morgan, charged with obtaining approval for the Sundre Hospital.

Archie McKechnie was a tall, lanky man with a quiet disposition that was accompanied by a gentle sense of humour. He quickly became one of Sundre's strongest supporters and was dedicated to his profession and to the people he served. His big heart earned him the gratitude and affection of many customers, for he was always willing to deliver a prescription for a sick child or patiently explain the effects and benefits of a new medication to a worried senior.

When the hospital was built in 1968, Archie was even busier. He became Director of Pharmacy and was responsible for hospital drug supplies and was on call twenty-four hours a day in order to provide whatever medications might be needed for the patients.

In February, 1970, Archie opened a new drug-store, McKechnie Drugs, in his own building east of the Sundre Hotel. This building also included a medical clinic for Dr. Alan White. For twenty years Archie served the public from this location, but on October 30th, 1990, he passed away very suddenly. The community was greatly saddened by the loss of both a friend and a dedicated community builder. He put his heart into Sundre and its people for nearly thirty years and when he was gone his loss was felt deeply.

Archie McKechnie loved the outdoors, especially activities such as fishing and camping. He was President of the Sundre Curling Club in the early 1960s and was also a member of the B.P.O. Elks. His years of active membership in the Chamber of Commerce encompassed some of the group's most memorable and productive years. While in Sundre, Archie married his second wife, the former Annette McDonald, and she worked by his side at McKechnie Drugs.

Sundre was still considered somewhat of a frontier town when Archie McKechnie and his little family moved here in the last days of 1961, but at the time of his death, the community was well on its way to becoming the modern and attractive little town it is today. His business venture and service to the community, his dedication to the hospital project and to its ongoing operation, and his friendly and caring disposition all played an important role in shaping of Sundre's future.



**Pharmacist Archie
McKechnie.**

*Photo courtesy of the Sundre
Hospital archives*

1961 Newsmakers

Natural Gas- A Big Turn On for Sundre

Municipal District Renamed

On January 1, 1961, the Municipal District of Mountain View and the Olds School Division became the County of Mountain View.

Fire Claims Sundre Business

In January, the B.A. Oil Station, located at the base of Sundre Hill, was completely destroyed by fire.

Student Enrolment Up

By March, student enrolment at the Sundre School climbed to seven hundred and twenty-one, an increase of

eighty-six students from the previous year. There were twenty-eight teachers by this time and eleven school buses were in use.

New Owner for Red Head Service

Roy Toone became the owner of Red Head Service Station in June 1961. The business was renamed, "Sundre Sales and Service" and remained under Toone family ownership until its sale and subsequent demolition early in the twenty-first century.

Natural Gas Turned On

November was a time of celebration for the people of Sundre. Rod Macleod, M.L.A for Olds Constituency and former Mayor of Sundre, lit the flare that symbolized the arrival of natural gas to the households and businesses of the town. The completion of the Alberta Gas Pipeline, running from Windfall, Alberta, to San Francisco, California, had made this possible. Following the turn on ceremonies, a three-day hunting jamboree took place and it is estimated this event brought thirty-five hundred visitors to the area.

Veteran Mail Man Retires

In December, after eighteen years of delivering mail to the Sundre area, Tom Shaw retired from his contract, passing the baton to Ralph Bookless from Olds.

Kwik-Wash Laundry Service Opens

Kwik-Wash Laundry opened for business in Sundre in December. In later years, this business was destroyed by fire.

Festivities Mark a New Era for Sundre Residents

Natural Gas System Installed in Sundre

In 1960, the development of natural gas fields around Sundre was ongoing and residents of Sundre were becoming anxious to have this commodity available for heating their homes. Previous positive experiences in forming the Sundre Power Cooperative convinced a number of leading citizens that a gas distribution system for Sundre could be equally successful.

Trevor Morgan, who had been instrumental in the forming of the Power Cooperative, began to work with other interested individuals and Town Council to bring natural gas to Sundre businesses and residences. The gas would be transported via the recently completed Alberta Gas Pipeline, running from Windfall, Alberta, to San Francisco, California. The Town raised fifty thousand dollars in debentures and the government matched this, ensuring enough funds for the total one hundred thousand dollar cost of the installation. In 1961, work began on the project.

In November 1961, Olds M.L.A. and former Sundre Mayor, Rod Macleod, ignited the natural gas flare that symbolized a new way of life for homeowners and business people in the town. The flare remained lit throughout a three-day hunting jamboree that brought thirty-five hundred visitors to the area and saw over a thousand people enjoy a barbeque of elk and moose steak. CKRD television was present throughout most of the celebrations.

The Town of Sundre has owned and operated the community's natural gas distribution system for nearly fifty years.

Early Confessions Held in Woodshed

Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Church

In Sundre's early history, Catholic families who settled in the community had to travel to Olds to attend Mass. In later years, Father D.A. MacLellan

settled in Olds and became responsible for many missions in the surrounding area, including Sundre. Every two to three weeks, mass was performed in the Sundre Women's Institute Hall, which was located two lots north of where the present Catholic Church is today. It is still intact and used as a residence today. Confessions were held in the wood shed that was located at the entrance to the building.

In the early 1960's, Sundre parishioners purchased the Westward Ho School House and moved it to the corner lot on 2nd Street SW. There was no running water available and, consequently, no indoor plumbing. A wood stove was the only source of heat.

By the summer of 1962, about a dozen local families were attending mass. They longed to have a real church but money was scarce. Eventually though, the parishioners borrowed what was needed to pledge towards a new church building. They could not afford elaborate design or furnishings, or the wages for hired help, but they were determined to have a basic church that would meet their needs.

By the fall of 1962, the foundations of the church were poured and construction began. Many church members volunteered their time in order to help bring about the reality of their own place of worship. They worked long and hard throughout the winter months and finally, at one o'clock in the afternoon on the 24th of March, 1963, they saw "Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Church" officially opened and blessed by Archbishop Jordon, of the Edmonton Diocese. The Sundre Catholic Women's League had donated money towards the purchase of the rug and statues and continued to support the church.

Fifteen years later, in 1977, renovations were necessary and construction began on an addition that would house offices and a church hall. Soon afterwards, the "cry room", a separate area where parents could traditionally take crying or disruptive children during services, was remodelled to accommodate a much-needed kitchen.

In 1989, the church held its first Christmas Concert and this continues to be a much-anticipated annual tradition in the Sundre community.

In 1990, a new sloping roof was constructed over the entire church to rectify a potential drainage problem and the building was given a

new coat of paint. The summer of 1993 saw a covered veranda built onto the entrance to the church.

Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Church celebrated forty-five years of serving the community in March 2008. Over those years, as Sundre's population grew to well over double its 1963 numbers, the church has seen many changes and faced several challenges. Today, the church continues to be a focal point in the lives of its parishioners and one more symbol among many of the dedication of Sundre people in reaching their dreams for a better community.

Catholic Womens League Begins in School House

The first meeting of the CWL in Sundre was actually a meeting of what was then known as the 'Altar Society', in June 1961. It was held in the church, which was actually the Westward Ho School House, purchased by Sundre parishioners and moved into town for that purpose. The old school was located where Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Church stands today. Father McRae was present at that first meeting, with approximately twelve ladies in attendance.

By October of that year, the name of the women's group had been changed from the Altar Society to the Catholic Women's League. Marg

Koenig was the first president when elections were held in April, 1962. The first meetings were held at the little church, then in members' homes, and then back at the church.

When the new church was built in 1963 the CWL donated \$600.00 toward the purchase of rugs and statues. Many other contributions have been made since that time, including new pews, chairs, tables, kitchen equipment, planters, song books, the organ and new vestments.

The members of the CWL organization have always been active in helping out where there is a need: visiting the sick and shut ins; providing lunches for funerals; making tray favors at the hospital; working at the Thrift Shop as well as various activities in the church. Through the years they have sold vanilla (\$1.50 per bottle in 1962); held bake sales and teas; catered to banquets and sold aprons and cookbooks to raise funds. The CWL has made many local and international donations over the years and these include Sundre Playschool, the Canadian Bible Society, the Christian Blind Mission, the Sundre Library and Our Lady of Victory Camp. They have always been available to help families in need and have also contributed to a mission in India.

The Catholic Women's League of Sundre is a great source of friendship and spiritual growth and continues to work for the betterment of the lives of people and families in Sundre and around the world.



Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Church in 2007

Newsmakers 1962

Curlers Ready to "Rock"

Round-Up Changes Hands

In March, Muriel Eskrick, one of the founders of the Sundre Round-Up in 1960, turned ownership over to Len Ruska.

Artificial Ice for the Curling Rink

The Sundre Curling Rink, constructed in the early 1950's, had artificial ice installed in June. Many volunteers contributed to the project to make this a reality.

Swimming Lessons in the Little Red

Until the construction of the Sundre Outdoor Swimming Pool in 1967, Red Cross swimming lessons were conducted in the Little Red Deer River.

Newsmakers 1963

The Era of the Cheap Skate

Skating Rink Rates

In 1963, public skating was very affordable. A single session would cost you ten cents while a season ticket would knock you back a dollar. A family pass cost five dollars for the season. Of course, at that time public skating took place outdoors on natural ice and so participation was very dependent on the weather.

Catholic Church Completed

In March, Our Lady of Fatima Roman Catholic Church, was officially opened. Archbishop Jordon of the Edmonton Diocese was present for the blessing of the new church.

Request for Hospital

In March, the Sundre Chamber of Commerce Hospital Committee presented a brief to Dr. Ross, Alberta Minister of Health, requesting that consideration be given to a hospital for the Sundre area.

Golf Club Formed

In the late spring, a group of local citizens came together and formed the Sundre Golf Club. Their mission was to look into the possibility of building a golf course for Sundre.

1964 Newsmakers

Roy Rogers Pursues Happy Trails in Sundre Area

New Town Constable

In April, the Town of Sundre hired Jim Horvath as its new Town Constable.

Crude Oil Spills from Fractured Pipeline

Approximately 3,800 barrels of crude oil spewed out a broken pipeline onto the Hyer property, four miles east of Sundre in April. Oil crews ignited the crude to prevent further contamination and this resulted in a huge cloud of black smoke that slowed traffic on Highway 27 to a crawl.

Overwhelming Support for Hospital

In May, more than 600 people turned out to hear Dr. Donovan Ross, Alberta Minister for Health, speak on Alberta's Hospital Building and Location Program. It is interesting to note that, at that time, statistics suggested that

Sundre and area could support a twenty-bed hospital working at 100% capacity.

Cold Mix Paving Project

In June, some Sundre streets received the first application of cold-mix paving.

Motel Opens

The West Park Motel, owned by Mr. A. Hassler, opened its doors for business in July.

Famous Cowboy In Sundre

Internationally recognised singer and cowboy actor, Roy Rogers, visited Sundre in August. He retained the services of Phil Temple, guide and outfitter, for a twenty-one day expedition in the area.

Community Sees in the New Year in Brand New Elks Hall

The New Elks Hall was completed just in time to host a celebratory party on New Years Eve, 1964. According to a Letter to the Editor of the Sundre Round-Up, sent in by MLA Bob Clark, it was quite a party!

British Surgeon was Key to Building of Hospital

Dr. Alan White and Family Exchanged Prestige for Adventure

When Dorothy Ellison from Northern England travelled to the small mining town of Ashington to look for employment, she could not have known that she was about to fall head over heels in love with a man who thrived on adventure and who would lead her into more than a few adventures of her own!

Dorothy had recently been accepted as a stewardess for British European Airways. The process leading to this acceptance had been a long one because in 1953 all applicants were required to be registered nurses. Dorothy, born in Morpeth, Northumberland, had achieved this goal and was hoping to find employment as a nurse for the few short months before her career with BEA commenced.

Upon entering Ashington General Hospital, the diminutive Nurse Ellison was soon approached by a well groomed, good-looking doctor wearing an immaculate white lab coat and a disarming smile. Dorothy's first thought was not that Dr. Alan White was the handsomest man she had ever seen, but that he was the cleanest! It was love at first sight for both of them and, as an added bonus, Dorothy also got the job she had been seeking!

Alan White was born in Berwick, Northumberland, and had served as a Spitfire pilot with the RAF in WWII. He later transferred to the Fleet Air Arm, where the fighter jets were catapulted into the skies from the decks of aircraft carriers. After the war, accustomed to the adrenalin rushes that had been so much a part of his flying experience, Alan entered another profession that could send adrenalin surging and often called for immediate and accurate responses: he became a surgeon. By the time he met Dorothy, in the early months of 1953, he was Surgical Registrar at the hospital.

The young couple began dating almost immediately and in December of that same year they were married. By the time she became Mrs. Alan White, Dorothy had been a stewardess for several months and had been living in Windsor, near London, while Alan had transferred to Great Yarmouth, where, as Senior Registrar, he trained doctors from Africa, India, Hungary and New Zealand to be surgeons.

Despite Dr. White's prestigious position, the couple were quite poor. England was still reeling financially from the war years and like most people, Alan and Dorothy had to be very careful with their money. They did not own a car and as the children began to arrive and Dorothy became a full time mum, things became even tougher.

One day in 1963, Dr. White was reading "The Lancet", Britain's leading medical journal. He came across a want ad for a surgeon in a small town called Sundre in Alberta, Canada, and was immediately interested. The ad required a commitment

from a surgeon to stay at least six months in order that the small community could qualify for a hospital. Dr. White phoned the Sundre contact person, local pharmacist, Archie McKechnie, and was disappointed to learn that the position had been filled. However, Mr. McKechnie said he would contact the Whites if the situation changed.

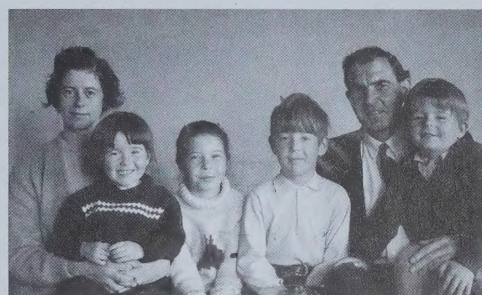
Two years later, after a succession of doctors had located to Sundre and quickly moved on, Alan got a call from Mr. McKechnie asking if the family was still willing to leave England and settle in the foothills community. Alan White was very keen to do so, his yearning for adventure was still strong, but Dorothy was far less enthusiastic. She didn't want to take the four children, Susan, Simon, Christopher and Philippa, away from the security of their home. She felt they would miss their relatives and friends terribly. Within a short time, however, Alan had persuaded her to make the move and on September 7th, 1965, Dr. and Mrs. White, their troop of small children, and the family's Jack Russell Terrier, Cindy-Lou, landed at Edmonton Airport under the bluest sky Dorothy had ever seen. Unfortunately, the couple's initial euphoria on being introduced to their new country was short lived. Events were to unfold very quickly that would force the Whites to examine their own sanity in leaving the familiarity of their settled life in modern England for the comparative backwoods of Western Canada.

The first revelation to send Dorothy's spirits plunging happened almost immediately. As the family cleared customs at the airport and headed through the arrivals gate, the first person they saw was Alan's mother! The senior Mrs. White had been on an extended vacation in Calgary when her son had let her know that his family was moving to Canada and that they would contact her once they got settled in Sundre. Mother and son did not have a good relationship and Dorothy had never liked her mother-in-law either. To see her standing there, waiting for them, with all her luggage piled up beside her, filled Alan and Dorothy with foreboding. When Alan's mother calmly announced that she had decided to stay with them for a while, the travel-weary family could only accept the situation and hope that the house that was waiting for them at their destination was big enough to accommodate an extra person.

Archie McKechnie, Neil Vanderzwan, and Rod Mcleod, all very active in the push for a Sundre hospital, met the family in Edmonton. The three

men had arrived in two cars in order to accommodate the Whites, their dog, and a large amount of luggage. It was as well they did this or they may not have been able to find room for the unexpected passenger – which probably would have been quite okay as far as Alan and Dorothy were concerned!

The drive from Edmonton to Sundre seemed to take forever, but the Whites' spirits were lifted somewhat by a beautiful sunset over the Rocky Mountains. Even as the travelers bounced over the rutted gravel road between Olds and Sundre, Dorothy remembers thinking that the view to the west, with the last rays of the sun painting the sky pink for as far as the eye could see, was the closest thing to heaven she could imagine.



The White Family After Their Arrival in Sundre. *Photo courtesy of Sundre Round Up archives*

The Whites had been under the impression that there would be a house waiting for them in Sundre, complete with furnishings and whatever medical supplies could be gathered for Alan's practice. A car would also be made available from Sundre Motors. They were disappointed to learn they would be staying in a motel, at their own expense, as the Chamber of Commerce had been unable to locate a home for them yet. Of course, this expense, which the family could ill afford, was doubled because an extra suite was required for Alan's mother. So began the family's new life in Canada.

The Chamber found a house for the family on Centre Street. Dorothy remembers it was painted yellow but that it was terribly small, certainly not spacious enough to house a family of six and a medical practice. The Whites politely turned it down and began making enquiries on their own behalf. Hale Gochee had a four bedroom home behind the Nazarene Church and as it was much more suitable to the family's needs and for the es-

establishment of a medical clinic, he agreed to rent it to the doctor and his family. With all their household possessions still in transit, the Whites had nothing in the way of furniture and supplies and almost no money. Sundre residents donated or loaned beds, tables, chairs, cutlery, and linens – whatever was needed to help the young family settle in comfortably. This outpouring of kindness and generosity from the community was something the doctor and his wife never forgot, and it went a long way in easing some of disappointments and doubts the family had felt since their arrival. The house was sectioned off to accommodate Dr. White's medical practice: the den became his office and the living room became a waiting room by day and was strictly off-limits to the children until the last patient had left the premises. The upstairs of the house could only be accessed through the living room/waiting room, so during the day the family was pretty well restricted to the dining room, kitchen and downstairs bathroom. The children never complained and the arrangement worked very well.

There was no universal health care system in place in Canada in the mid 1960's. People had to have private insurance in order to cover any medical expenses and sometimes this was provided through their employment. Confederation Life and Imperial Life were two of the companies providing coverage at this time. Many people, however, had no insurance and very little disposable income. Fortunately, this did not mean they were refused medical attention. Dr. White was often paid in chickens, rabbits and/or vegetables and he performed several emergency appendectomies and many other procedures without pay. The introduction of Medicare in 1967 opened the doors to free health care for all Canadians and assured physicians and surgeons of an income. This was a welcome step forward as far as Alan and Dorothy White were concerned: Free health care had been available in England since the introduction of the National Health Service in 1948, so it had been difficult for the Whites to arrive in Canada and adjust to a basically private system that had the potential to exclude a large section of the population.

Transportation soon became a pressing matter for Dr. White as he was required to conduct surgeries and baby deliveries at the Olds Hospital every morning, as well as being on call for emergencies there at any time of the day or night. The

trip to Olds was often a difficult one due to the unpredictable conditions of the gravel road, and it certainly took a lot longer to travel between the two towns in the 1960's than it does today. The family had been told initially that there would be a car available for them, but this didn't materialize and the situation had become very urgent. Luckily, Sundre's big heart became apparent again when Reg Morris stepped up to the plate. Reg was Mayor of Sundre at that time and the Whites were touched and grateful when he offered to sign a note for three thousand dollars so that the doctor could purchase a vehicle at Sundre Motors.

People in the Sundre area were used to going to Olds with their medical needs, so Dr. White's new clinic got off to a slow start. While her husband was in Olds on weekday mornings, Dorothy, with her nursing background, would take care of any emergencies at the Sundre clinic. A couple of incidents from the early years stand out. The first involved a young man who arrived at the clinic one morning and told Dorothy his father was outside in the truck and not feeling well. Indeed, he was not, as Dorothy discovered when she went out to the vehicle to examine him and found herself in the unfortunate position of having to explain to the young man that his father was dead. On another occasion, Dr. White had just left the house and, as he often did, had stopped in at McKechnie Drugs to see if Archie needed anything from Olds. A woman with a strong foreign accent arrived at the clinic in considerable distress and said to Dorothy, "I do not feel so goot".

The patient was a big lady and Dorothy noticed right away that she had vomited. She asked the woman several times if she was pregnant and the patient just kept repeating "I do not feel so goot".

Dorothy eventually persuaded the lady to lie down and soon had her suspicions confirmed. The woman was in the final stages of labour! Luckily, the doctor was still at the pharmacy and was able to rush home and deliver the infant, which, it turned out, was the woman's tenth child! Dorothy quickly assembled a makeshift cradle out of a laundry basket and some linens, and mom and baby were transported to Olds to be thoroughly checked out.

As the weeks passed, more patients began to arrive at the medical clinic, which was held from two until five every weekday afternoon. Dr. White had also become very involved in petitioning for a Sundre hospital and he frequently travelled to

Edmonton, usually accompanied by Mr. McKechnie or one or more of the other people who were working so hard to bring this much needed facility to Sundre. Alan attended many meetings that were held with the Registrar at the College of Physicians and Surgeons. Dorothy also played a role in fighting for the Sundre hospital when she took part in the historic march on the County Office in Disbury. Eventually, as a result of the cooperation and hard work of many community members, a ground-breaking ceremony was held and the Sundre Hospital was on its way to becoming a reality.

The entire community was excited to see the hospital being built, but none more so than Dr. White. Dorothy remembers that when her husband wasn't working, you could count on finding him at the hospital site, eagerly noting each day's progress and snapping photographs of the various stages of construction. The dream of this day was the motivation that had brought his family thousands of miles from their homeland and it was the focus of all the effort and dedication he, and numerous others in the community, had expended over the preceding years. On August 16th, 1968, the Sundre Hospital was officially opened and a new and exciting era of healthcare for the community began.

By the early 1970's, the Whites had purchased a home on the Bergen Road. The children were growing up and the Sundre Medical Clinic, now well established, had been relocated to a space adjoining McKechnie Drugs. In the meantime, Dr. White had travelled to Ireland at his own expense to interview Dr. William Moorhead. The doctor, who was an anaesthesiologist, accepted a position in the Sundre practice and with his wife, Pam, and son, Jonathon, settled into the Nazarene Church Manse, just north of the Whites' first Sundre home. The Moorhead family moved to Kelowna, BC, a few years later and for a short time, Dr. Peter Cox, a neurologist from the UK, practiced alongside Dr. White. When he left, Dr. James Corley joined the practice and stayed in Sundre for a number of years. Doctor Corley built and still owns the Sundre Plaza.

The medical clinic moved again, this time to a bay where the Sundre Round Up was formerly located. Then, when Pharmasave planned an expansion, the clinic moved a few doors further west, next door to what used to be Radio Shack and is now a liquor store.

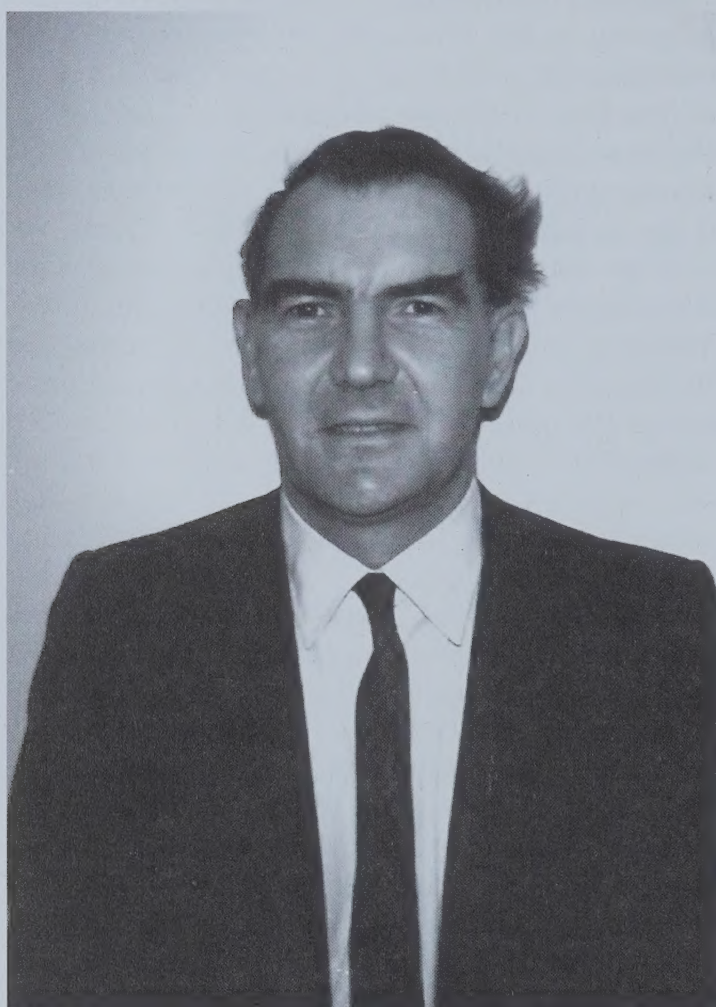
The Whites soon realized that their home on the Bergen Road had a lot of problems. Among other things, the septic tank, which they eventually discovered was nothing more than an old car body, gave them all kinds trouble, and so they moved into town again. They loved their house on Willow Crescent and appreciated the quiet neighbourhood and the natural setting at the back of their home.

Dorothy had not been idle during the years when Alan's clinic had been expanding and his position as Surgeon and Chief of Staff at the hospital had replaced many of his responsibilities in Olds. Besides tending to the children, she was a Cub Leader for a number of years and also ran "Double D Antiques", in partnership with Dot Johnson. In the 1970's, the Sundre Hospital was experiencing a shortage of nurses and, although at that time RNs were not encouraged to work in the same hospital as their physician husbands, the situation was quite critical and Dorothy was asked if she would join the staff. She attended Red Deer College for three months to update some of her RN courses and took a position as Surgical Nurse, assisting Dr. White. For four years of her five at the hospital, Dorothy thoroughly enjoyed running the very popular ECS program, which introduced children to hospital procedure in a relaxed and fun way and helped them lose some of the fear they might have encountered if they were admitted to hospital for any reason.

In June 1998, Dr. Alan White suffered a ruptured aortic aneurysm and was flown by STARS helicopter to Calgary, where he had emergency surgery. Dorothy recalls that he never really recovered from the ordeal. A few weeks later, Alan took Dorothy to the Foothills Hospital in Calgary, where she was to have surgery the next day. She recalls that it was a beautiful Sunday evening and that after Alan helped her get settled into her hospital room, he left to see if Susan was in town, planning to spend the night there and then return to the hospital the next morning. Finding his daughter was not home, Alan returned to the hospital and he and Dorothy went to the cafeteria where they had coffee and chocolate cake. Before he left for home, Alan teased Dorothy that he thought he would just climb into bed with her and spend the night. In retrospect, Dorothy has wished many times that she had agreed to it.

Dr. Alan White left the hospital and headed home at around seven-thirty in the evening. Dor-

othy had been given a sleeping pill and was soon asleep. At around ten o'clock a nurse shook her awake and told her that Alan had been involved in a serious motor vehicle accident and was in the Emergency Department. For the next three weeks the family's emotions hovered between hope and heartbreak as doctors did everything possible to try and save Alan's life. In the end, they said there was nothing more they could do and in August 1998, Dr. White passed away. It had been almost exactly thirty years earlier, in August 1968, that the doctor and his family had stood with the residents of the Sundre community and felt so very proud and excited to see the Sundre Hospital open its doors to the public for the first time.



Doctor Alan White in the 1960s.

Photo courtesy of the Sundre Hospital archives

Following the death of Dr. White, Marcella Burkholder initiated a community fundraiser for a portrait that would be installed in the lobby of the Sundre Hospital. Ruth Jessop, a Didsbury artist, was commissioned for this work. Dr. White's portrait is a tribute from the community for his

efforts in helping to bring a hospital to Sundre and for his many years of dedicated service to that facility and to residents of Sundre and district.

Following his death, Doctor White's practice was sold to Dr. Leonora Stampa from South Africa. Dr. Stampa ran the clinic until 2006, at which time she decided to pursue a different course in her medical career. Greenwood Family Physicians purchased the practice and run it as a walk-in clinic.

Dorothy White, like many who left their homeland to begin a new life in Canada, still finds herself with a foot firmly planted in each country. At times she longs for the quaint English villages, the early spring flowers, and the rich culture and history of her former home. At other times she is thrilled to live in this place of heavenly sunsets and majestic scenery, amongst neighbours and friends with kind and open hearts, and close to her children and a total of fifteen beloved grandchildren. Although some of the White children did enter the medical profession, they all chose, eventually, to pursue careers in other fields. They are all older now than their mum and dad were when they set out with their young family on an adventure that would change all their lives, and also improve the lives of the residents of an entire community.

1965 Newsmakers

Floods, Flags and Epic Journeys

Meteor Lights up the Night Sky

At 10:50 p.m. on March 31, many Sundre and area residents witnessed an amazing sight when they saw a flaming meteor flash across the western sky.

The meteor was teardrop in shape and about the size of a full moon. It had a tail of intense white light, fading to yellowish orange. The countryside was lit up for about four seconds.

New Canadian Flag Raised

A historic moment for Sundre Schools

occurred on May 4, 1965. At 3:00 p.m., the new Canadian Maple Leaf flag was officially raised, replacing the Red Ensign.

Streets Lose their Names

Prior to 1965, Sundre streets all had names. From June of that year, numbers replaced all street and avenue names. It was felt that this move would make it easier to locate residences and businesses.

Big Red Cuts New Channel

In early June, a portion of the Red Deer River broke through into a new channel and washed away a fence, trees and valuable topsoil from the property owned by Russ Greenwood. It was stated that the river was gradually eroding its west banks and relocating itself further inside town limits.

Flooding Results in Evacuations

Several Sundre residents were forced to evacuate their homes in the early morning hours of June 18th when the Red Deer River flooded its banks. Heavy rains in the mountain regions were believed to have caused this flash flood.

Historic Packhorse Adventure for Local Man

One of the longest packhorse trips in the history of North America started off from the Hungry Horse Ranch, in Sundre, just after dawn on a morning in June 1965.

Stan Burrell, owner of the ranch and a partner of the Rocky Mountain Safari Company, left with twenty head of

horses, two trucks and one truck of food and equipment, on a journey of nearly two thousand miles to the McKenzie Mountains in the Northwest Territories. The horses travelled by truck for the first fifteen hundred miles and then were saddled and packed through some of the most rugged wilderness areas in North America.

New Doctor Arrives in Sundre

Doctor Alan White and his family arrived from England in September. Archie McKechnie and Neil Vanderzwan met the family at the Edmonton Airport and brought them back to Sundre, where Dr. White was to set up a practice.

Long Time Fire Chief Retires

After fifteen years as Sundre Fire Chief, Ed Halvorson retired on November 23. Tom Wallace took over the position.

Dam for Red Deer River? Dyking Confirmed

On December 23, Mr. Martin Overguard, who represented Sundre at a meeting with the Department of Water Resources, reported that plans were being considered for a huge, multi million-dollar dam on the Red Deer River in the Cartier Creek area. At the same time, Mr. Overguard confirmed that work would begin on two dykes along the banks of the river in 1966. One of these would be located on the flats below the hill on the Bergen Road, the other in the southwest area of town, near the former mushroom factory.

Heavy Rain and Snow-Melt Force Big Red Over its Banks

The Flood of 1965

The Red Deer River has flooded many times since the settlement of Sundre was first established. In the early decades of the 1900's there was a period where heavy flooding occurred every second year or so and bridge washouts were the norm rather than the exception. Many people believe that it was the destruction of the Fletcher/Niddrie Bridge in Derbytown that turned the tide, so to speak, in favour of the development of the Sundre area. Of course, the Sundre (McDougall/Hagen) Bridge suffered its share of disasters too, but in 1917, when the Niddrie Bridge was once again destroyed by the force of the swollen river, it was decided it would not be rebuilt. A sad day indeed for the once thriving hub of Derbytown, but a welcome bonus for the little hamlet of Sundre and the people who sought to develop it.

An iron span bridge had been built at Sundre in 1916. This bridge, despite the ravages imposed on it by the unpredictable furies of the Red Deer River, served the community until 1959, when it was replaced by the concrete structure we still use today. For a year, the two bridges stood side by side, presenting an interesting representation of the area's changing history.

Under normal circumstances, the Red Deer River moves at a fairly rapid pace of about twenty-four kilometres (15 miles) per hour. As it travels downstream, the force of the water deposits a large volume of rocks and gravel and, over time, the resulting build-up forces the river to carve new channels for itself. This alone has always been of concern to the community, as it has resulted in bringing the main stream closer to residences and businesses. With extra water in the river as a consequence of heavy rains and/or rapid snow melt in the mountains, these new channels overflow and cause areas to flood that may not have flooded before. Many older people still living in Sundre today remember devastating floods in the 1940's and 1950's in which the Bearberry Creek played a role that proved to be just as destructive, if not more so, than that of the Red Deer River. But still vivid in the memory of many Sundre residents is a flood that took place in the 1960's.

On June 18th, 1965, four years after the old

bridge had been demolished and nine years after Sundre had been incorporated as a Town, a historically noteworthy flood once again disrupted the community. The new bridge was not significantly damaged but one can only speculate as to whether the old iron-span structure, repaired and rebuilt so many times over the years, would have been able to withstand the force of the raging water. The floodwaters came over the banks at approximately four in the morning that day, forcing several residents to rise from their beds and hurriedly vacate their homes. The crest followed around noon of the same day and several streets, including parts of Highway 27, were under eight inches of water and had debris rolling around which caused a serious hazard to traffic. This flood was not as serious as the one in 1952, which knocked out part of the old bridge and closed many area roads for the better part of a week, but it was severe enough to disrupt the community for a couple of days and to cause flood damage in several area homes; reminding residents, once again, that Mother Nature was still the boss!

The Day Lillian McGonigal Declared War on the River

Sundre resident, Lillian McGonigal, who moved to Sundre from Saskatchewan as a young girl, and later married Jack McGonigal, was a victim of more than one flood on the Red Deer River. After marrying Jack and starting a family, the couple eventually bought a house on the banks of the river where the Greenwood Park Campground is now located. Jack and Lillian and children, Carmen, born 1945 and Sheila, born 1947, were evacuated in the 1952 flood and then again in 1965. Lillian remembers being woken up at four in the morning on that fateful June day in 1965, and feeling grateful that crews had stayed awake during the night to monitor the engorged river. The family hastily gathered together a few possessions, along with their dog and cat, and left as the floodwaters encroached on the road in front of their property and the alley behind it. They had been offered shelter at the home of Dave and Phyllis Burke, who were away at the time, and they were thankful for the dry, safe haven.

Returning home when the floodwaters receded, Lillian and her family were greeted by a soggy mess of silt and debris throughout the little house. They had been through the same scenario one time too many and as Lillian looked around

her and saw the work it was going to take to restore the family's home and possessions to acceptable condition, she put her head in her hands and cried. Reaching under the bed, she wearily dragged a container out through the sludge. It held a selection of brand new towels and some white dress shirts, which Jack had never had occasion to wear. Lillian opened the lid and looked in dismay at the soaking wet, heavily stained items. She had no access to a washer or dryer and the rain was still coming down steadily, making line drying impossible. Dismay turned to anger as Lillian collected up the ruined articles and, in the wind and pouring rain, marched down to the Big Red with them. Standing on the bank, she confronted the river that had, at the height of its own fury, attacked and fouled her beloved home. She flung the towels and the shirts into the heavy current and gave voice to her own pent up rage and despair, yelling:



June 18, 1965. Water in the Area South of the 4-way Stop Where Jack & Lillian McGonigal Made Their Home. Photo Courtesy of Mary Lund

" Here, YOU took these from me, now you can keep them!"

Recalling the incident forty-one years later, Lillian laughs, only slightly embarrassed by her desperate expression of frustration and resentment on that day. One can only imagine the sight of her, standing in the pouring rain beside the turbulent river and yelling at it with all her might as she assaulted it with her arsenal of soggy weapons. What better picture could there be to symbolize

the strength and character of the women who had faced adversity and the elements over many decades in order to claim Sundre as their own?



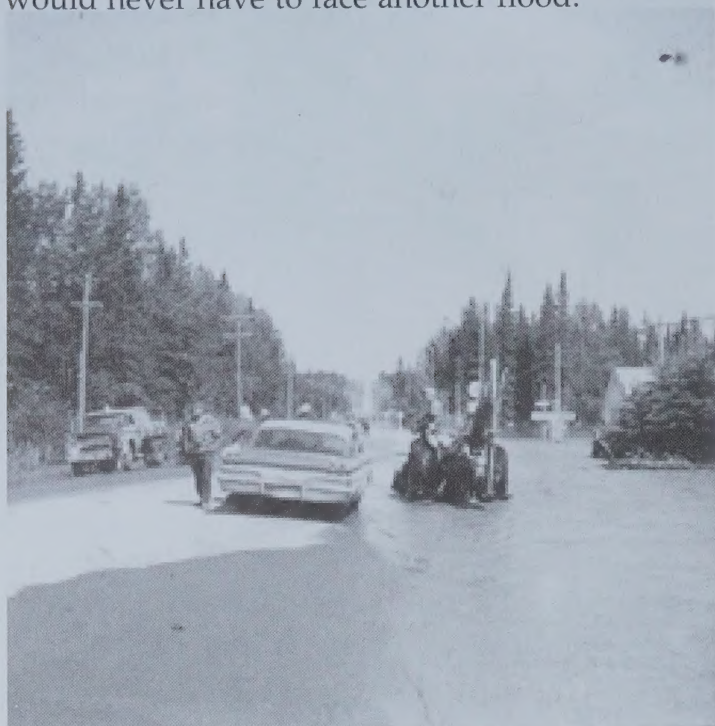
Water Swirls Around the Pumps at Corner Service at the Junction of the Bergen Road and Highway 27. Photo courtesy of Mary Lund



A Vehicle Can be Seen Half Submerged in the Floodwaters of 1965. Photo courtesy of Mary Lund

Lillian and Jack, and their children, lived for many years among the tall trees on the banks of the Big Red. They witnessed many important events and changes as Sundre grew from a Village to a Town, but after the flood of 1965, they conceded defeat to the power of nature, packed

up what was salvaged from their belongings and left their little home for the last time. They purchased a hilltop property on the James River Road, knowing that for as long as they lived there they would never have to face another flood!



Floods on Sundre's East Side in 1965.
Photo courtesy of Mary Lund

It is interesting to note that forty years after the 1965 flood – to the day – the Red Deer River and the Bearberry creek overflowed their banks almost simultaneously in a one-in-two hundred year flood that will possibly go down in history as one of the worst ever recorded in the area. This 2005 flood happened despite the dykes along vulnerable stretches of the river and the additional safety provided downstream by the Glenifer Dam.

1966 Newsmakers

Par for the Course – Golf Club Opens

Two-Headed Calf Born

Early in the New Year it was reported that area rancher, Nick West, was appropriately surprised when one of his registered Hereford cows gave birth to a two-headed calf. The calf weighed 100

lbs and did not survive. It had two hearts and two sets of lungs but everything else appeared to be normal.

Arthur Ogden Appointed Town Secretary

On April 11, Arthur Ogden was appointed Secretary-Treasurer to the Town of Sundre. He was later appointed Municipal Administrator and served in that position until his retirement in 1974. During his tenure, he served as Welfare Officer, Development Officer, Secretary of the Town and Urban Recreation Board and Secretary to the Municipal Planning Commission.

New Singing Group Available for Special Occasion Events

In May, a group of local residents, including Neil Vanderzwan, Bob Rankin and Tony Hoevers, formed a singing group that they christened "The Sundre Choralaires." The group was available to sing at weddings, farewell parties and other special events.

Honourable R.C. Clark Gives Hospital Go Ahead

The newest member to Cabinet, The Honourable R.C. (Bob) Clark addressed a meeting of the Sundre Hospital Committee on July 8. He had good news to share: construction of the Sundre Hospital would commence in the spring of 1967!

As it turned out, the start of construction of the hospital was delayed until the winter of 1967, due to resistance to grant approval of the facility by the County of Mountain View.

Sundre Golf Course Officially Open

The brand new Golf Course became an official recreational venue on August 28th. It held its very first tournament on that date and many local residents took part. Among the winners were Bob Rankin, Cliff MacBeth, Don Cook, D.Chrest and R.Lockrem.

Sundre's First Female Councillor Elected

In October, residents of the Town of Sundre elected their first-ever female Councillor. Marcella Burkholder was voted into office to serve a three-year term alongside another new councillor, Russ Matwychuck.

Sundre Golf Course

Community Ownership for Nearly Forty Years

Initial planning for a golf course for Sundre originated in the late spring of 1963 when a small group of local citizens came together to discuss the matter. Four men: Kai Rasmussen, John Marek, Cliff MacBeth and Bob Rankin began looking for land which would be suitable for a nine hole course. None of them had the money for such a project, but together with four additional golfing enthusiasts, they signed a bank note and purchased eighty acres of land near the top of the Sundre Hill from Cleave Kearns. The property was completely covered in dense bush and transforming it would not be an easy job.

An architect from Calgary was engaged to design the fairways and then Cats and a breaking plow were hired to begin the hard graft of clearing the trees and taming the root bound earth. Gary Gibbs was responsible for much of this initial clearing work. Apart from the heavy machinery work, a committed group of volunteers provided all the labour, with Kai Rasmussen proving to be an extremely dedicated member of the team. He willingly donated his time and equipment to the Sundre Golf Course for many years.

As the fairways began to take shape, deben-

tures were sold to interested members of the general public for twenty-five dollars. Club members worked on the design of the greens, which were initially sand and would remain so for ten years.

John Marek donated the organization's first clubhouse – a small building that he had been given in payment for some work he had done locally. It came complete with a cook stove and a table and chairs.

When the first tournament was held at the Sundre Golf Course on August twenty-eighth, 1966, it was the realization of a dream. The planning, fund-raising and hard physical labour that had spanned several years had finally paid off and the nine-hole course was officially open.

At that first historic tournament, local golfers not only took pride in using the course they had helped create but they proved they knew how to play as well: Cliff MacBeth won the first flight, with Don Cook winning the consolation prize; R. Lochrem won the second flight with D. Chrest winning the consolation prize and Bob Rankin won the championship flight consolation prize.

During the early years of the Golf Club, an honour box was used to collect green fees during the week. On Saturdays and Sundays, Peggy MacBeth and Corrie Marek sold green fees, coffee, sandwiches and pop from the little clubhouse.

Peggy MacBeth was the first secretary of the club and in later years Isobel Lambert held this position. John Marek was the first member to have a ride-on cart, and initially he received a lot of ribbing about this from his fellow members, but it wasn't too long before several other members decided they needed a cart too!

Albert Hoffner, through his employment with Home Oil, often donated the labour of his employees for digging and construction work on the course. Improvement and maintenance of the Golf Club was becoming a true community effort.

From 1984 – 1986 Dan Bach was president of the club. He was another of the organization's outstanding supporters and contributors and it was during his time in office that the second nine fairways were built. Twenty-nine acres of land were purchased from Bea Martyn and an additional ten acres from Ralph Wiltsie. Jack Kultjes was hired for the Cat work and Ralph Wiltsie contributed to the project with his own tractor. Grass greens had been installed around 1976 and had been architect designed. The additional nine holes would bring the Sundre Golf Course to a new level of

excellence. No experts were hired for the design of the new fairways and Dan Bach oversaw all the work, also contributing his own time and machinery to the project. To pay off the loan that was required for the construction of the extended course, debentures were once again offered to the public. The back nine holes were opened in the spring of 1987.

Between 1980 and 1989, Belford Rushka served a two year term as president of the club and seven years as manager. It was during this time, in 1984, that a new club house was built at a cost of ninety thousand dollars. Prior to construction, the club had a bank balance of twenty-five thousand dollars, but in less than a year enough money had been accumulated from fees related to increasing membership that the cost of the new building was completely paid for by June 1st, 1985.

By the fall of 1988, the club owned a full line of maintenance equipment and had a debt of forty-five thousand dollars, resulting from the expansion of the course. By 1989 this debt had been completely paid off.

Belford, an avid curler at that time, will not easily forget a day when he and a group of fellow curlers were playing golf. Belford happened to be driving a cart across the fairway when suddenly he was hit squarely in the side of the head by a speeding golf ball. The impact caused a few stars to appear in Belford's line of vision but, luckily, he was not seriously injured. A little later, the wife of the gentleman responsible for the unfortunate shot made the comment that the shot was amazing because her husband was rarely able to hit the fairway and his golf ball usually ended up in the trees! That he should get the ball *on* the fairway *and* hit a moving target was quite a feat!

For a number of years, Bob Forshner was employed as manager of the club. Membership was growing, with people travelling considerable distances to take part in tournaments. A variety of well-known celebrities played golf on the Sundre course at one time or another.

Following two very dry years and subsequent growing concern over the condition of the greens, a decision was made by the management and executive to install a watering system. The project proved to be much more expensive than had been anticipated and resulted in the club suffering severe financial hardship. Extreme efforts were made to rectify this situation and to retain the club as a publicly owned facility, but after nearly forty

years of successful operation, the Sundre Golf Club was forced to concede defeat and the course was sold to Totem Golf, a private company, on February 1st, 2006. The proceeds from the sale were enough to pay off the club's heavy debt load, but when the organization changed hands, a very significant period of achievement in Sundre's history was over.

Totem Golf has made a number of attractive improvements to the course and it is understood that the company is committed to retaining the golf course's public status for ten years. There are two other eighteen hole golf courses in the Sundre area: Coyote Creek Golf and RV Resort Inc., west of town, and Forest Heights Golf Club, in the Eagle Valley area.



Sundre Golf Club 2008

Miracle Workers

Sundre and District Hospital Auxiliary

People who have lived in the area long enough to remember may still consider the approval of a hospital for Sundre, in 1967, to be somewhat of a miracle. It had been a long hard fight for the community, as dedicated individuals and organizations pressed their cause with various levels of government and faced disappointment over and over again.

Sometimes, a little human intervention is required to bring about a miracle and after years of struggle and disappointment, it was community

1967, two hundred and thirty-seven Sundre area women descended en-masse on the County Office in Didsbury. They shared a collective vision and they pursued that vision with united determination. Many people dedicated innumerable hours to the hospital cause and each of them helped make the dream a reality, but it was those two hundred and thirty-seven protesters who, by their sheer force of numbers and steadfast resolve, turned the tide in the community's favour to bring a hospital to Sundre.

A hospital is only a building with a lot of rooms until it is equipped. It was going to take a great deal of money over the coming years to purchase and maintain the medical apparatus required to ensure that the hospital consistently offered a high standard of patient care and comfort. It soon became obvious that *more* miracle workers were required.

On October 24, 1967, a group of pro-active Sundre and area women came together at a meeting, chaired by Mrs. Clara Rushka, to form a Hospital Auxiliary. This group would become a catalyst for the future, setting the stage for numerous years of dedicated work and community involvement to date. Consequently, many major and minor miracles have been achieved for the Sundre Hospital.

The first executive of the Sundre and District Hospital Auxiliary, appointed at that October 1967 organizational meeting, was as follows:

Elaine Nielsen	President
Hazel Smith	Secretary
Phyllis Auger	Treasurer
Melva Ratcliff	Ways & Means Committee

Initially, Auxiliary meetings were held in the Women's Institute Hall, which was located a little north of the present Sundre Elks Hall and the Catholic Church. Once it was completed in August 1968, the new hospital became the headquarters for the group and remains so to this day. Up to thirty-seven members attended those early meetings, and while numbers have fluctuated over the years, membership today remains strong and extremely committed to the cause.

There are no minutes for the early years of the Hospital Auxiliary, but from 1972, the records show that fundraising was pursued through catering services, an Easter Tag Day, and profits from the Howdy Wagon. The Howdy Wagon was a trolley

stocked with items such as candy, stamps, writing paper, envelopes and other items patients might require. It was wheeled from room to room by volunteers so that patients could make their purchases.

The Howdy Wagon, along with other early fund-raising activities, would eventually be discontinued but, in September 1977, a Bazaar and Bake Sale was introduced and this would become a popular annual event. Initially, the bazaar included a Pinning Ceremony Tea for the Volunteens, known in the early years as Candy Stripers. The name was changed to "Volunteens" when boys started to show an interest in the volunteer services previously provided by the all-girl, pink uniformed "Candy Stripers". The organization was eventually disbanded.

Financial contributions from the Thrift Shop, founded by Sundre resident, Helen Morgan, and later transferred to the management of the Auxiliary, were, and still are, a very major and ongoing source of financial support.

Somewhat ironically, some of the early funding received by the Auxiliary came from cigarette machines that were located right in the hospital! Three percent of the profits from two machines were transferred directly into the organization's coffers and went towards the purchase of equipment to enhance the health care of the broader community. Looking back on this from our enlightened perspective, it seems inconceivable that tobacco products would actually be available to sick people in, of all places, a health facility, but it was common practice amongst hospitals at that time.

In 1981, the Central Alberta Region of the Alberta Hospital Auxiliary Association was formed and the Sundre group joined its membership. Georgina Hilts, who came to be known among her associates as "Mighty Mouse", due to her relentless energy and enthusiasm, was Auxiliary President, and Pam Erickson, a well-loved teacher at the elementary level, was Secretary. It was part of Pam's duty to record all the meetings and send the minutes to other members of the Central Alberta Region, including those in the communities of Ponoka, Innisfail, Didsbury and Olds. This practice allowed for a cooperative sharing of information and ideas. Since that time, many members of the local organization have served on the Regional Executive.

Over more than forty years, hundreds of



Early Members of the Sundre Hospital Auxiliary. Photo courtesy of Sundre Hospital archives

thousands of dollars have been raised by the Sundre and District Hospital Auxiliary. This dedicated group, with strong support from the people of the Sundre and surrounding area, has been responsible for many of the major equipment purchases that have enabled the Sundre Hospital to continue to offer first-rate patient care.

Although major equipment purchases have a vital place in the efficient operation of a modern hospital, it is the small, thoughtful purchases that make a stay in the hospital less stressful. The Auxiliary has been behind the purchase of numerous items which enhance comfort for patients: Toys and books for the children; sheepskin covers for wheelchairs; room clocks; hair care equipment; humidifiers; televisions, juice fridges and fans etc.

In more recent years, the Auxiliary has awarded one or more annual one thousand dollar scholarships to local students pursuing an education in the field of medicine. The group has also made regular and generous donations to the hospital's Long Term Care facility and to the Palliative Care Association.

More than four decades have now passed since that original group of concerned citizens formed the Sundre and District Hospital Auxiliary.

Through many years of dedicated work, the organization has realized its vision for a hospital that provides sophisticated patient care through the purchase and utilization of modern equipment and supplies. Now, in the early years of the twenty-first century, as advances in medicine and medical technology are occurring at an unprecedented rate, the challenges for the Hospital Auxiliary are even greater. The need for additional up-to-date and, consequently, more expensive, equipment will only increase as the Sundre Hospital and Care Centre strives to serve a consistently expanding population.

1967 Newsmakers

A Hospital for Sundre at Last!

Trevor Morgan is First Hospital Board Member

In January, at the suggestion of Mr. A. McKechnie of the hospital committee,

Mr. Trevor Morgan was appointed as the first official board member of the Sundre General Hospital District # 51.

Groundwork Laid for Covered Arena

At a minor hockey banquet in March, the groundwork was laid for the building of a covered arena. One thousand dollars was collected at this time towards this goal.

Penny Agencies Founded

In March, Ollie Prosychen purchased Ajax Agencies and renamed the insurance and real estate business, Penny Agencies.

County Denies Approval of Hospital for Sundre

On April 12, 1967, despite a motion by Councillor Pekse to endorse the formation of Sundre Hospital District # 51, the County of Mountain View held a secret ballot that resulted in refusal to accept the revised boundaries for the new hospital district. Following the vote, a decision was made to destroy the ballots.

Sundre Women Descend on Didsbury

On April 19, two hundred and thirty-seven Sundre area women descended on the County of Mountain View offices. Their official delegation of thirty women asked the question of County Council, "Why not a hospital in Sundre?"

At the end of the day, after two and three quarter hours of debate, Reeve Bagnall, who had consistently opposed a hospital for Sundre, informed the women that a

decision would be made by Council within the week following his meeting with Dr. Ross on April 20. The ladies agreed to return to Council on April 27 to hear that decision.

Hospital Approved

The Sundre community didn't have to wait until April 27 to hear the verdict on their plans for a hospital. On Saturday, April 22, news came that the County had met in special session and passed the necessary legislation to allow the Sundre Hospital project to proceed.

RCMP Detachment a Reality

Corporal L. Wells took over official policing duties in May. Corporal Wells with the assistance of Constable Newman, organized a Sundre RCMP Detachment.

An Invasion of Bears

By August, eight bears had been destroyed in the Sundre area. All of these animals had been scavenging close to town and frightening area residents. The plague of bears was blamed on a poor berry crop in the West Country.

Local Girl Takes World Championship

Miss Audrey Henry, recipient of many rodeo related trophies, took the title of Girl's World Champion Calf Roper in September.

Two New Businesses for Sundre

Two new businesses opened in Sundre in October. Mr. Ken Guenther, from Innisfail, became the operator of the former J&J Tire Service, while Mr. Gal-

loway, from Brooks, took over the Sundre Meat Market.

New Library

The new Town of Sundre Public Library opened its doors on November 17.

MLA Turns the First Sod for Hospital

On December 7, at 3:30 p.m., the Honourable R.C. (Bob) Clark, Social Credit Minister for Youth and M.L.A. for Olds-Didsbury Constituency, performed the official Sod Turning Ceremony for the new Sundre Hospital.

New Thrift Shop Officially Open

The New Sundre Thrift Shop building opened its door on December 8, at 10:00 a.m.

Pioneer Lodge Opens

Pioneer Lodge, southwest of Sundre, opened its doors in December.

Pearce's Flowers Open for Business

The official opening of Pearce's Flowers in Sundre took place in December.

Where There's a Will There's a Way

Sundre Hospital and the Community that Refused to Give Up

The earliest recorded mention of the community needing a hospital occurs in the minutes of an organizational meeting held by the Sundre & District Chamber of Commerce in 1953. Present at this meeting were Rod Mcleod, Dave Burke, Alf

Thomas, M. Romyn, J. Weir, W. Menneer, Trevor Morgan, D. Clark, J. Kyncl, F. Pekse, Nichol Jackson and C. Neilson. The meeting was a result of concerns about ongoing overcrowding at the Olds Hospital. It was sometimes so bad that patients were accommodated in the hallways, or billeted to local hotels and private homes. On average, between seven and eight of the beds in the small hospital were occupied by Sundre and area residents. Olds was looking at building a new wing to the facility to ease the overcrowding problem, but agreed to hold off on any decisions until Sundre looked into the feasibility of building its own hospital.

The members of the Chamber who went on to serve on the hospital committee endured a long, hard struggle, and their hopes were dashed many times. They advocated for a hospital, but, at that time, would have been willing to settle for a nursing home, for it was obvious that an aging population would soon require specialized services. Residents of surrounding areas also pushed hard for a hospital, but by 1964 the community seemed to have reached a dead end. A brief had been presented to the Minister of Health, Dr. Donovan Ross, in Edmonton in the summer of 1963, but there was no response and hopes diminished.

Adversity and challenge were not strangers to the little community on the banks of the Big Red. From its earliest beginnings, it had struggled to overcome many difficulties, including devastating floods and fires, economic stagnation and the apparent perception of other local towns and municipalities of it being an insignificant back-woods community of little value to the economy, or to the area in general. Throughout all the times of struggle, Sundre residents, rather than being intimidated by the sometimes-overwhelming odds against them, drew together and became stronger. There was never a finer example of this determined community spirit than was displayed during the years preceding the approval of a hospital for Sundre.

The Honorable Robert Clark, M.L.A. for the Olds-Didsbury Constituency, which included Sundre, and a one-time teacher in Sundre, was coming to the community on his annual pre-legislative visit. A hundred and one women showed up at the hotel room where Mr. Clark was to hold his meeting. There wasn't enough space to accommodate them all, so the meeting was quickly moved to the United Church Hall, where Mr.

Clark was presented with a brief asking him to acquaint Dr. Ross with the community's need for a hospital and adequate medical staff. The delegation asked Mr. Clark to invite Dr. Ross to come to Sundre to meet with residents of the area. On March 19, 1964 a letter arrived from the Honourable R. Clarke confirming a meeting with Dr. Ross on May 20th.

Dr. Ross met with and spoke to 600 residents at the Sundre High School auditorium. He offered them some hope that one day a hospital might be built, providing certain requirements were met, namely that a doctor be brought to the area and that residents show interest in the doctor's services and the hospital. The following is from a Sundre Round Up newspaper report from that time:

"Overwhelming Support for Hospital

More than 600 people turned out to hear Dr. Donovan Ross, Alberta Minister for Health, speak on Alberta's Hospital Building and Location Program. It is interesting to note that, at that time, statistics suggested that Sundre and area would have enough patients to keep a twenty bed hospital working at 100% capacity."

The Hospital Committee of the Chamber of Commerce proceeded to advertise for a doctor. Several had come to the community in recent years but none of them stayed long. It was not until September 1965, when Dr. Alan White and his wife, Dorothy, along with their four children, arrived in Sundre from England, that the reality of a hospital began to take shape. Still, the struggle was far from over and community residents continued the fight. A Hospital Steering Committee was formed and members included Muriel Eskrick, Sheilagh McKechnie, Rod Mcleod, Dr. Alan White and Dorothy, Don and Marcella Burkholder and Bessie Ellithorpe. Archie McKechnie, Sundre's only pharmacist at that time, worked very hard in the background, devoting a great many hours to the hospital project.

In December of 1966, the Department of Health and Dr. Ross established the Sundre General Hospital District # 51 by Ministerial Order and asked local municipalities for nominations to form a local Hospital Board. Trevor Morgan, co-owner of Sundre Motors was appointed the board's first member. Dr. Ross, in his communication, conveyed his hope that construction of the hospital

could get underway early in 1967.

The community was elated with the news - until it became apparent that the County of Mountain View opposed the establishment of a hospital here. The Town of Olds was also in strong opposition to a Sundre hospital. Several meetings were held with the County, one of which was attended by 700 Sundre and area residents - a *huge* turnout from such a small community! Unfortunately, the effort was to no avail. It became apparent that stronger measures were needed.

On April 19th, 1967, two hundred and thirty-seven Sundre area women, led by Sheilagh McKechnie, created history when they arrived in the County Office in Didsbury to present a brief and to promote their case for a hospital for Sundre. Their efforts paid off when, on April 22, 1967, only three days after the presentation of the brief, the County of Mountain View, under pressure from both the Sundre Community and the Provincial Ministry, agreed to the formation of Hospital District No. 51.



Some of the Women Who Descended on Didsbury. *Photo courtesy of Sundre Hospital archives*

The Town of Sundre donated a ninety-three acre parcel for the facility and construction began on a thirty-four-bed acute care hospital. After all the years of hard work and then the months of excitement and anticipation, the official opening of the Sundre Hospital was held on August 16, 1968.

On January 19th, 1969, Patricia Campkin began a career at the Sundre General Hospital that would last twenty-six years. As Director of Nurs-

ing she carried a great deal of responsibility for the efficient operation of the hospital, for patient care and for the management of staff. She was highly qualified for the job, with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing and diplomas from McGill University, Quebec, and Montreal General Hospital.

Patricia (Pat) Warwick was born in Lachute, Quebec on May 1st, 1943, and grew up in the small town of Brownsburg, Quebec, where she completed grade school. Her parents, Russell Warwick, a toolmaker, and his wife, Sarah, a schoolteacher, were born and raised in Western Quebec.



Director of Nursing, Patricia Campkin.

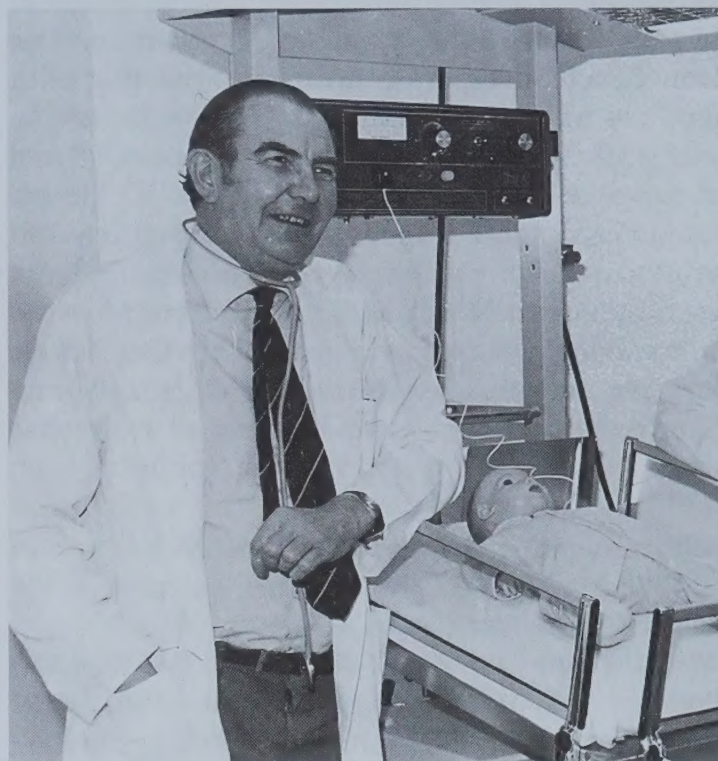
Photo courtesy of Sundre Hospital archives

While working at the Montreal General Hospital, Pat made the acquaintance of a young woman from Alberta, who invited Pat to her Olds home for a holiday. It was while enjoying this holiday, in 1966, that Pat met Sam Campkin, a young man from the neighbouring town of Sundre. After Pat returned to Quebec and went to McGill University, the couple kept in touch by mail, and two years later, in 1968, Pat returned to Alberta to work in the Olds Hospital and then to teach at the Edmonton General Hospital School of Nursing. Pat and Sam were married on August 16, 1968 at the United Church in Sundre. Coincidentally, this was the day of the official opening of the Sundre General Hospital.

A Mrs. Spyker was the first Director of Nursing at the hospital, but she stayed only a short time and then Pat was hired for the position.

Pat has many good memories of her years as

Director of Nursing in Sundre. She has great respect for the physicians she worked with over the years, the first being Dr. Alan White, who Pat describes as being a wonderful diagnostician.



Doctor Alan White Worked Hard to Make the Dream of a Hospital for Sundre a Reality.

Photo courtesy of Sundre Hospital archives

Dr. James Corley, who joined Dr. White's practice in the 1970s, after Dr. William Moorhead moved to British Columbia, was, in Pat's opinion, a very smart man who brought specialized medicine to the foreground in Sundre, and in so doing, moved Sundre medical practice into the realm of cutting edge knowledge and technology. This practice has continued under the leadership of Dr. Hal Irvine who has served the Sundre community since 1982. Dr. Irvine has been instrumental in promoting family medical practice in rural Alberta by being very involved in committee work and by teaching in the medical program at the University of Calgary. Many medical students have been introduced to rural medicine and, indeed, some of Dr. Irvine's students have returned to Sundre to practise family medicine. Drs. Carol Rowntree, Michelle Warren, Peter Warren and Tim Souster have all had Dr. Irvine as a teacher and mentor. Because of physicians such as Dr. Irvine, Sundre Hospital and Care Centre is held in high regard in medical circles throughout the province.

Pat also gives kudos to the Ladies Hospital Aux-

iliary for their years of unswerving dedication to fund raising, resulting in the purchase of many pieces of state of the art equipment.

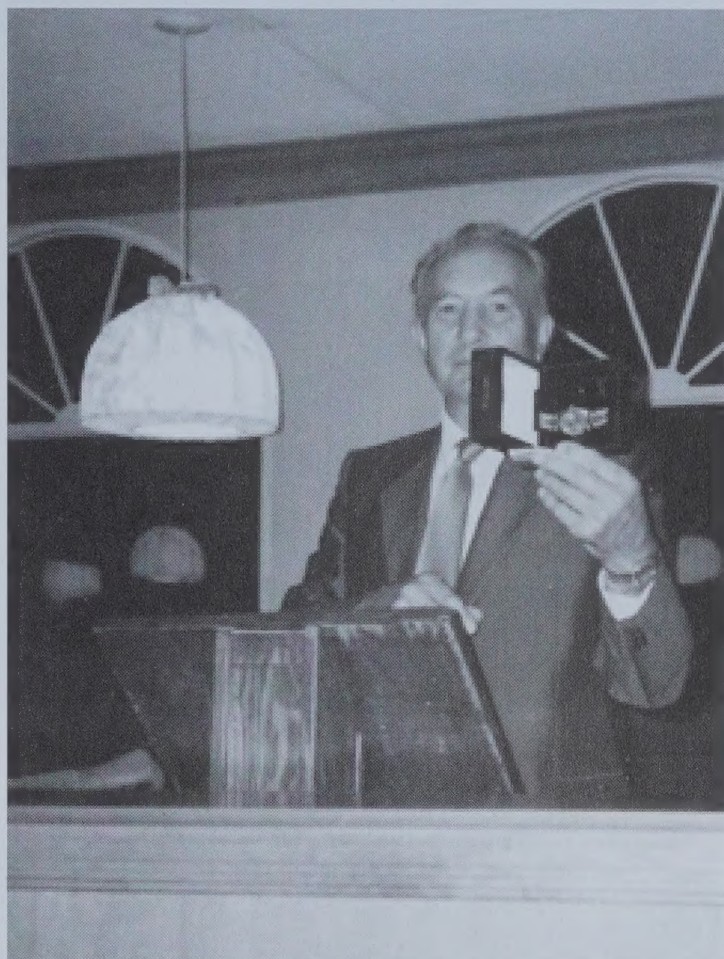
Archie McKechnie, for many years Sundre's only pharmacist, is another individual Pat remembers with great respect. She refers to him as "the best booster Sundre ever had". As Chairman of the Hospital Committee of the Sundre Chamber of Commerce, he was totally dedicated to the fight to bring a hospital to Sundre and to promoting the town in any way he was able. As Director of Pharmacy at the hospital from 1968 until his death in 1990, Archie was on call 24 hours a day and was one hundred percent reliable. Mr. McKechnie, who operated Sundre's only drug store and pharmacy for many years, also served a term on Town Council.

Pat Campkin and her staff really enjoyed playing practical jokes on each other, and sometimes on the doctors too, which didn't *always* go down too well with the physicians. One time, the resident teaching skeleton was dressed in a gown and placed in a bed – a new patient for Dr. Corely to examine during his rounds on April 1! Another time, Dr. White had played a joke on one of the kitchen staff, instructing her to cover the telephone with a plastic bag because AGT (the telephone company) was going to be "blowing out the phone lines". When Pat and her staff found out about this, they sought swift retribution: They covered the toilet used by the doctor with plastic wrap – and waited for him to come roaring with indignation down to the front desk. It never happened. Whatever the results of that prank, Dr. White never breathed a word about the incident!

Pat Campkin retired from nursing in the mid nineties, but her retirement didn't last long. She took a refresher course several years ago and returned to the hospital on a casual basis. Today, she is Resident Service Leader of Continuing Care (formerly Long Term Care) at the hospital.

John Marek holds the distinction of being an employee of the Sundre Hospital for about six months before the building was completed! Pre-hired for a position that would eventually be known as Director of Maintenance and Engineering, he was initially put to work on the installation of plumbing and heating in the partially constructed building. John feels this was a very beneficial experience as it gave him a very thorough understanding of the layout of the apparatus he would eventually be responsible for. Once the

hospital building was complete, John began his "real job", also taking on the responsibility of overseeing the staff in the laundry and housekeeping departments. Retiring in 1994, he was an employee of the Sundre Hospital for twenty-six years.



John Marek on the Occasion of his Retirement in 1994. *Photo courtesy of John and Corrie Marek*

Many prominent people were involved in the push for a hospital for Sundre and thousands of volunteer hours were donated by all kinds of organizations and individuals. There is probably no other period in the community's history that can rival the huge cooperative effort that resulted in this much needed facility.

There have been several renovations made to the original hospital building since 1968. In 1970, an addition was added for a boiler room and in 1985 another addition was built for physical therapy services and inhalation therapy. Also, in 1985, there were several renovations inside the original structure.

In 1986, the Hospital Board submitted a formal request to build a long-term care facility and in 1988, the Board's request was finally granted.

1990 proved to be a busy year too: The Sundre

Emergency Services Society, operators of the local ambulance services, and the Mount View Health Unit, known today as the Sundre Community Health Centre, were both granted approval to locate buildings on the hospital site. Also in 1990, a new staff parking lot and a helipad were constructed. The helipad enabled S.T.A.R.S., an emergency medical helicopter service, to begin operating in the local area. Perhaps the biggest event in 1990 was the approval of \$988,000.00 for renovations to upgrade several parts of the hospital. This big project was completed in 1991.



Melva Ratcliff Cuts the Ribbon Following the Completion of Renovations in 1991. Ty Lund is far Left. *Photo courtesy of John & Corrie Marek*

During the early years of the Klein Government's health care cuts there were times when the hospital seemed doomed for closure. Staff and area residents fought back, determined to hang on to the facility that thirty years earlier they had struggled so determinedly to build.

The hospital has served Sundre residents and visitors for nearly forty years and its place in the community remains of vital importance.

Plans are in place to build a new hospital within then next few years.

Hospital Administrators 1968 – 2007

*George Lastiwka
Neil Upham
Garth Upton
Melva Ratcliff
Candice Spurrell
Bonnie Jones
Marian Grivell
Bonnie Jones*



George Lastiwka was Sundre's First Hospital Administrator.

Photo courtesy of Sundre Hospital archives



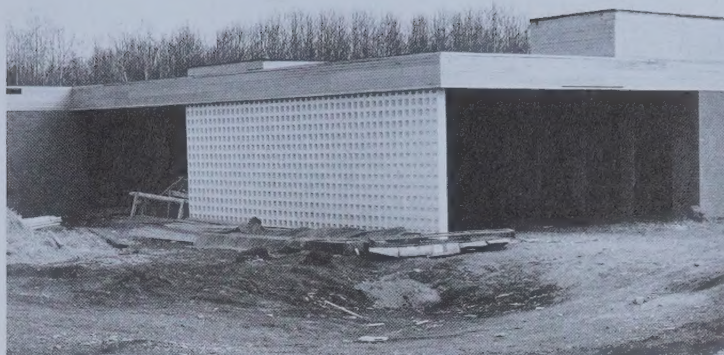
Melva Ratcliff was Hospital Administrator for a Number of Years Prior to her Passing. *Photo courtesy of Sundre Hospital archives*

Since the formation of the David Thompson Health Region, all major decisions regarding the Sundre Hospital are made in Red Deer.



Members of the First Hospital Board. Photo courtesy of Sundre Hospital archives

Members of the First Hospital Board.
Photo courtesy of Sundre Hospital archives



Hospital Begins to Take Shape in March 1968.
Photo courtesy of Sundre Hospital archives



The Hospital Shortly After Opening in 1968.
Photo courtesy of Sundre Hospital archives



Rod Macleod, 1st Chairman of the Hospital Board & Donovan Ross, Alberta Minister for Health, at the Opening of the Sundre General Hospital in 1968. *Photo courtesy of Sundre Hospital archives*



Mary Bressler Gave Birth to the First Baby Born in the Sundre Hospital.
Photo courtesy of Sundre Hospital archives



Construction Begins.
Photo courtesy of Sundre Hospital archives



Sundre Hospital and Care Centre in 2007

Making a Difference in the Classroom and on “The Hill”

MP Myron Thompson

Myron Thompson was born to parents Claus and Lola Thompson, in Monte Vista, Colorado, USA, on April 23, 1936. The third of four children, Myron was raised on the family farm, where he made his home until reaching the age of twenty-five.

Dorothy Rose (Dot) Hodges was born June 20, 1945, the youngest child of William and Dorothy Hodges. She and Myron met at dance in Dillon, Montana in 1964. By this time, Myron had attended Fort Lewis Agricultural and Mechanical College and from there he transferred to Adams State College in Colorado. While in college, Myron was playing ball in a game against the University of New Mexico when some scouts for the New York Yankees invited him to try out for professional baseball in their farm club. It was a great day for the rookie player, and while he didn't make it to the big times, he says he will always feel proud he was given the opportunity. Myron also spent two years in the United States Army, stationed in Hawaii. He and Dot married in June 1966, in Albuquerque, New Mexico and just a month after the birth of their first child, Myron D., in 1968, the family moved to Sundre, Alberta.

Teaching positions had been advertised through the County of Mountain View, which at that time oversaw all the schools within its jurisdiction. A postal strike at that time meant

that all applications and negotiations had to be done by phone. Myron was told there were positions available in several locations and he stated his family's preference for a very small town in a rural location. Sundre appeared to fit the bill perfectly and Myron accepted a position at Sundre High School.

Myron and Dot have never regretted their move to Sundre and they are in total agreement that they will “live here forever”. Although Sundre has grown and changed physically over the years, the Thompsons believe the community has retained many of the values that make it special. Myron's opinion of Sundre is that “It's always been a solid place to live. It rises to the needs of others and I don't want to see it changed.”

In 1973, the Thompson family welcomed a new member, Dennis, into their household and a few months later, in 1974, Myron became a Canadian citizen, at the same time retaining his US citizenship. Also in 1974, he was elected to Sundre Town Council and three years later he became Mayor.

In 1980, having been a teacher and guidance counsellor at the high school for twelve years, Myron was offered the position of principal. He was happy to accept, however, a condition attached by the County School Board was that he would have to resign from his position as Mayor of Sundre. This did not sit well with Myron, the late 1970s had been busy years for the Town and he did not want to abandon the projects he had committed to, at least not until the end of his term in October of that same year. However, the County was adamant and so, at least for a while, Myron's political aspirations came to an abrupt end.

In all, Myron was a staff member at the Sundre High School for a period of twenty-three years. Known to students as a tough but fair man, it seems natural that when he re-entered the world of politics in 1992, this time on a federal level and with local residents, Marcella Burkholder and Bob Mastin, as his Campaign Managers, some of the issues Myron felt most strongly about would involve children and youth. And so it was that he journeyed from his High School principal's office at the base of Snake Hill, to a career that would lead him to a political office four thousand kilometres away – in the House of Commons *on top* of Parliament Hill.

With his strong right wing leanings, his well-recognised religious beliefs and his straightforward

way of talking, Myron Thompson was an ideal candidate to represent voters in the Wild Rose Riding on behalf of the Reform Party of Canada. One of his campaign promises was to be "the most accessible Member of Parliament the riding has ever seen", and voters have found him to be true to his word.



Myron Thompson MP and Dot in 1996.
Photo courtesy of Myron & Dot Thompson

In 1993, Myron was elected to parliament and he has served four consecutive terms as MP for Wild Rose, first for Reform, then its successor, the Canadian Alliance Party, and most recently, the (ruling) Conservative Party of Canada, with whom the Alliance Party merged in 2003. He has served three different leaders: Stockwell Day replaced Preston Manning shortly after the turn of the twenty-first century, and then the present Prime Minister, Stephen Harper, took the leadership of the Alliance Party in 2002, and remained in that position when the party merged with the Conservatives in 2004.

During his fourteen years in office, Myron, who once took part in a "friendly" wrestling match with another local man, Sam Campkin, to raise

money for the Sundre arena, has focussed his energy on several different issues. Two of those closest to his heart have been Youth Justice Reform and the toughening up of laws surrounding the perpetrators of child pornography. Even during his time on Town Council, Myron, with the support of many other Alberta mayors, had fought to bring about a tightening of the justice system nationwide. He feels there were some successes in this respect, but that with the introduction of the Canadian Charter of Rights in 1982, many of the gains were lost. He believes that, under the Charter, the rights of perpetrators of crime are protected at the expense of the victims.

In 2006, Myron was the recipient of the KINSA (Kids Internet Safety Alliance) "Hero of the Fight" Award for "Outstanding Leadership and Personal Commitment". This group has recently been instrumental in shutting down a massive worldwide, Internet based, child pornography ring and the local MP feels proud that he has had some impact in this.

There have been several high points in Myron's political career, not the least of which was an introduction and presentation to US President George W. Bush in 2005: It was actually Liberal Party Leader, Paul Martin, who was Prime Minister at the time, who informed the President that Myron and Dot's son, Dennis, who like his dad has dual citizenship, had served in the United States Armed forces in both the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts, but it was Conservative Leader, Stephen Harper, who accompanied Myron to Washington. The Wild Rose Riding MP is extremely proud of a photograph, signed by the President, of himself shaking hand with Mr. Bush, while PM Harper looks on.

In his early years as an MP, Myron was very involved with Indian Affairs on a grass roots level. Dot accompanied him to many of the reserves he visited across Canada, often helping with the driving. The couple were very moved by the plight of the First Nations people on some of the reservations, where corruption amongst the Council had led to poverty and abuse for the people. On more than one occasion, Myron and Dot arrived at their destination with groceries for the poorest families. The Indian Affairs department of the current government is presently utilizing the report that resulted from this period in Myron's political career.

Always individual, often controversial, the farm kid from Colorado, who came to a little Alberta

town to teach school forty years ago, has left his mark in the hallowed halls of Parliament and on the small but flourishing community on the banks of the Big Red that he and Dot are proud to call home. Whether crossing the street in Sundre, or in Ottawa, Myron is recognised instantly by his ever-present cowboy hat, which he wears as a symbol of his pride in his western roots and of his responsibility as a representative of his constituents.

In June 2007, Myron announced that he would not be running as a candidate in the next election. He entered federal politics at the age fifty-seven and now, fourteen years later, he feels it is time to step down and take life a little easier. He and Dot have no great plans for the future, except to remain in Sundre and to continue to enjoy the community and their family. Dennis and his wife live in town, while Myron D., who served four years in the Marine Corps, and his wife, live near Innisfail, Alberta. Between them, they have eight children, giving Myron and Dot lots of opportunity to stay busy in their retirement! Asked if he will stay interested and involved in politics, Myron revealed that he fully intends to share his expertise in any given area if requested to do so.

The Wild Rose MP has led an exciting and successful life and, as Dot puts it "It has been very interesting being married to Myron. There has never been a dull moment!"

Myron's favourite memories of his many years in Sundre include some funny stories from his times as school teacher/principal and town councillor: He remembers the boy who was exhausted and out of breath after running the cross country. Myron asked him if he was okay and the child replied, "Oh, Mr. Thompson, I ran so hard I got crabs!"

Then there were the inevitable funny notes from parents, such as:

"Dear Mr. Thompson, I respectfully request no Sex Education for Johnny. He learns all the sex he needs at home."

"Dear Mr. Thompson, Johnny has rope burns around his neck. Please look into it. P.S. How would you like a rope around your neck?"

It gives the one-time principal a great deal of satisfaction to run into a former student who is doing well in life, and to realize that perhaps he played a part in setting the stage for that to happen.

During his time on Town Council, Myron sat on the Recreation Committee and, being an en-

thusiastic sportsman himself, was often involved in a very "hands on" way. He was very proud of the new baseball diamonds in town and he and Dot had volunteered to help pound posts for a surrounding fence. The posts and a post-pounder had apparently been delivered to the site but, when the Thompsons arrived to begin work, all the materials and tools had disappeared. It was extremely puzzling at first, but then the couple detected the sound of a post-pounder not too far away. On investigation they found several volunteers of the Stampede Board constructing a fence at the Rodeo Grounds – using the supplies purchased for the baseball diamonds! The misunderstanding caused quite a commotion at first, but was eventually resolved and the new diamonds were fenced in.

In his personal life, Myron is thankful for the day he met Dorothy Rose, back in 1964; for his family, and for the many opportunities he has been given in life. In his own words, Myron Thompson has always been and will always be a strong conservative and a strong believer in Jesus Christ – and, straight talking as always, he makes no apologies to anyone for either.

1968 Newsmakers

The Year of "New"

Hospital Administrator Hired

Mr. George Lastiwka became the first Administrator of the Sundre Hospital when he assumed his official duties on January 1.

Revelstoke in Business

In February, Revelstoke Sawmill opened at a location south of Sundre on the Bergen Road.

Chamber Purchases Land for Campground

In March, the Sundre and District Chamber of Commerce purchased approximately five acres of land on the banks

of the Red Deer River for a campground. The land was bought from Mr. J. McGonigal.

Hospital Officially Open

On August 16, the Sundre Hospital was officially opened at 2:00 pm by Doctor J.D. Ross, Minister for Health for Alberta, the Honourable R.C. Clark, Minister for Youth, and Robert N. Thompson, M.P. for Red Deer. Up to 750 people toured the brand new facility.

James Bressler First Baby at New Hospital

James H. Bressler was the first baby to be born at the Sundre Hospital on September 14, 1968. Dr. Wray from Olds was the attending physician. Young James received many gifts from the Town of Sundre and from the Ladies Hospital Auxiliary.

Alberta Liquor Store Opens

After several years of controversy, a government controlled liquor store opened in Sundre on November 7, 1968. The Store was managed by Leo St. Louis.

New Doctor Arrives from Belfast

Dr. W.P. Moorhead from Belfast, Northern Ireland, arrived in Sundre with his wife and son in December. Dr. Moorhead joined Dr. Alan White in his Sundre practice.

Swimming Pool in Hole

In its first year of operation, the Sundre Outdoor Swimming Pool, which was located on the South side of Main Avenue West in the vicinity of the present

Parkwood Motel, realized a deficit of \$3,600.00. The pool, opened in 1967 and run by the Town of Sundre, would provide years of enjoyment to area youngsters and other residents, but that first deficit was perhaps an omen for the future. Repair and maintenance of the facility was frequent and costly and eventually led to its closure.

Preserving the Past for the Future

The Sundre Pioneer Village Museum

The idea of forming a historical society in Sundre was first suggested by members of the Sundre Women's Institute in 1964, but it wasn't until April 28, 1968 that a group of interested residents met at the home of Mrs. Muriel Eskrick to begin the process. The concern was that too many artifacts were being lost, either through fires or floods or through being passed down to family who did not recognise their historical significance.

It was decided that the group should form a Society dedicated to the "preservation of historical data and artifacts" in the community. The application was signed by eight persons on June 27th, 1968.

A week later, on July 2nd, the Sundre & District Historical Society was incorporated into the Societies Act. Charter members were Jim Miller, President, and Judith Miller; Minnie Cook; Pat Spence, Secretary, and Doris Spence; Muriel Eskrick; Gladys Bowman and Minnie Norquay.

By 1969, tentative plans were in place for the creation of a museum complex to house some of the many local artifacts the society felt might soon be lost to the passage of time. That same year, the Society held its first Pioneer Fair, an event initiated by Gladys Bowman that provided for the display of historic artifacts brought in by local participants. The fair, held that first year in the Sundre Elks Club building, also featured demonstrations of the old pioneering skills, such as spinning, carding, butter churning, rope making and rawhide work.

The following year, the Pioneer Fair was held at the Sundre School. This popular community event was discontinued in 1974.

REGISTERED
JUL-2-1968

APPLICATION FOR SOCIETY STATUS

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that we desire to form a society under The Societies Act, R.S.A. 1955, and that:-

1. - The name of the society is Sundre District Historical Society

2. - The objects of the society are:-

- (a) To provide for the preservation of the history and to promote and afford opportunity for friendly and social activities.
- (b) To acquire lands, by purchase or otherwise, erect or otherwise provide a building or buildings for social and community purposes.
- (c) To encourage and promote amateur games and sports.
- (d) To provide a meeting place for the consideration and discussion of questions affecting the interests of the community.
- (e) To carry on a literary and debating club for the discussion of topics of general interest, and to encourage the practice of public speaking among its members.
- (f) To secure the delivery of lectures on social, educational, political, economic and other subjects, and to give and arrange musical and dramatic entertainments.
- (g) To establish and maintain a library and reading room.
- (h) To provide all necessary equipment and furniture for carrying on the various objects.
- (i) To provide a centre and suitable meeting place for the various activities of the community.
- (j) Generally to encourage and foster and develop among its members a recognition of the importance of agriculture in the national life.

* We do sell, manage, lease, mortgage, dispose of, or otherwise deal with the property of the society, and to establish a fund or funds to be used for the objects of the society.

3. - The operations of the society are to be carried on in the town of Sundre in the Province of Alberta.

DATED this 27th day of June 1968

SIGNED: Pat Spence President BRI. Sundre
Mrs. Minnie Cook Secretary R.P.I. Sundre
Mrs. Muriel Eskrick Treasurer R.P.I. Sundre
Mrs. Judith Miller R.P.I. Sundre
Clayton Bowman R.P.I. Sundre

WITNESSES: R. Spence Photomont B. 183 Sundre

The Original Application for Society Status in 1968. Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum



Some of the Charter Members of the Sundre & District Historical Society L - R: Pat and Doris Spence, Minnie Cook, Muriel Eskrick and Jim and Judith Miller.

Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum

In the meantime, the Historical Society had realized their dream of having a place to display old buildings, equipment and artifacts. A log cabin from the Bergen area, donated by Norman Halvorson and built by John Fossum in 1913, had been moved onto land that now encompasses the Greenwood Campground. In 1970, Alberta Lieutenant Governor, Grant MacEwan dedicated this cabin as a historic site and opened it to the public. A few years later, in 1976, the old Bergen School House, built in 1908, was moved onto the site, along with many of the original schoolbooks, desks, and other artifacts.

The Pioneer Village Museum, at its present site, was officially opened on May 21, 1988, following the construction of dykes along the Red Deer River where the original museum site had been. The Bergen School was relocated to the new site, as well as the log cabin. Retired schoolteacher, Russ Matwychuck, designed an old fashioned barn in the 1980's and construction was completed by a group of volunteers. These included Russ, John Howton, Gordie Dibble, John Whitesell (senior), Jim Haug and Rueben Olsen. Some of the money for this project came from a donation from the proceeds of the sale of the Women's Institute Hall in the late 1960s. There were other volunteers who helped shingle the steep roofed structure, including Bert Cardon and men hired for the purpose by retired school principal, Chris Marfleet. A blacksmith shop, built by the same group of volunteers, houses an old forge and related equipment. A Ferryman's House, which originally stood at the Garrington Ferry Crossing, was moved onto the museum grounds and it was followed by the old log James River Ranger Station cabin, which



The Barn in the Grounds of Pioneer Village

has been refurbished by local volunteers and area youth, utilizing many of the original logs and artifacts.

Many of the farm implements displayed throughout museum grounds were restored and spray-painted on the Matwychuck farm and Russ remembers the day his daughter, spotting her father covered in paint as usual, commented that he was beginning to resemble an old relic himself!



The Old James River Ranger Station

In recent years, the young people of the community helped build a Youth Museum in which to display artifacts relating to childhood and adolescence.

A large reception centre, complete with a gift shop offering local arts and crafts, was completed in 2003. It has recently been named the Niels Eskesen Reception Centre, in memory of the man who spent many years as a dedicated volunteer member of the Historical Society, and the museum, and who, during his term as President of the Historical Society, lost his life as the result of an accident during the construction of the reception centre.

The Chester Mjolsness World of Wildlife Museum is a world-class exhibit that was more than a decade in the planning before reaching completion and opening in the spring of 2007. The attraction houses one hundred and fifty wildlife mounts, most of which were donated by big game hunter Mjolsness, a dedicated Historical Society member who is the son of one of Sundre's earliest pioneering families and the co-founder of Spray

Lakes Sawmills. Local artist, Lorraine Hughes spent more than a thousand hours on the three-dimensional murals in the wildlife facility, while taxidermist, Bibianne Munksgaard, was responsible for most of the natural and realistic animal mounts. Many other volunteers have each donated many hours to the construction and completion of this fine building.

With a history stretching over four decades, the Sundre and District Historical Society has had some amazing successes, almost all of which are directly related to the dedication of its volunteers and the generosity of area residents. Like many non-profit organizations, the Sundre Historical Society is heavily dependent on grants and donations and on the many hours of unpaid labour provided by its members and its executive.

In 2008, Annette Rose is president of the Historical Society and Gordon Moore is full time manager.



The Niels Eskesen Reception Centre

1969 Newsmakers

Fundraising Fervour

Walkers Raise \$10,000.00 for Arena

In November, 256 walkers started out from the Sundre School on a 16-mile walkathon to raise money for an enclosed skating arena. The oldest to com-

plete the walk was Mrs. Alice Ellithorpe, aged 72. The youngest was Rick Johnson, aged 6. Marion Henry, a grade 8 student, walked 8 miles on an artificial leg.

Local Men Wrestle for Arena Dollars
Fundraising for the Sundre Arena was fast and furious in 1969 – so was the action when local men Sam “Killer” Campkin and Myron “Tiger” Thompson came together for a wrestling match. Both men emerged victorious when a tie was called after fifteen minutes. \$750.00 was raised for the arena.

Christmas Harvest?

Due to beautiful weather conditions, harvesting was still being done in Sundre in early December.

Sundre’s Population Expanding

In 1969, the Town of Sundre’s population reached 925.

1970 Newsmakers

Making Ends Meet on \$1.40 an Hour

Drug Store Nears Completion

In February, the construction work at McKechnie drugs, owned by pharmacist, Archie McKechnie, and the attached Medical Clinic, which would become the practice of Dr. Alan White, was very close to completion.

Minimum Wage

The minimum wage for employees over 18 years old was \$1.40 an hour in April.

Grocery Store in Former Vennard Building

Stan and Shirley Gamble opened a grocery store in the former Vennard building in November.

Grant MacEwan Dedicates Pioneer Cabin

Lieut. Governor Grant MacEwan was in Sundre on November 7th to dedicate the Pioneer Cabin, an historic log building from the Bergen area, to the pioneers of the area. The cabin was located in what is now the Greenwood Park Campground, on the banks of the river, but has since been moved west of there to the Sundre Pioneer Village Museum grounds.

Helping the Community Develop Since 1971

Sundre Ag. Society a Vital Community Link

Sundre and District Agricultural Society was formed in 1971 after some of the local residents learned that grant money was available from the Alberta Government for such projects as a new skating arena. Steve Davidchuck, Niels Eskesen, George Overguard and Howard Smith were behind the organization of the society. With the help of the grant money the arena was started. In January of 1972, the arena opened.

The Agricultural Society also helped with the School Fair, which had been held every fall since 1918. The Adult Fair also started and the two fairs are still held on the first Friday after the long weekend in September.

In 1985, grant money was applied for to help with the construction of the new Curling Rink and Agricultural Building.

In 1996, the Society was involved with raising funds for the construction of the Aquatic Complex, another large project for our community.

Over the years, due to the dedication of many community members, the Agricultural Society has helped many other organizations. Some of these are Sundre and Bergen 4-H Clubs, Light Horse Club, Farmers Market, Sundre Race and Rodeo Association, Garden Club, Pony Club, Curling Club, Community Van, Search and Rescue and the Sundre Library.

Once a year a workshop is held for grade 4 students; this is to help them to be more aware of agriculture and the products and by-products of our industry.

The Society hopes to be active for many more years and always welcomes new members.

Article contributed by a member of the Sundre Agricultural Society.

St. Cuthbert and St. George Anglican Church

Church Beginnings Born in Doctors Office.

Contributed by Shelley Ingeveld (edited)

In 1970, an advertisement was placed in the local newspaper, calling for folks interested in forming an Anglican congregation in Sundre to meet in Dr. White's office. The group decided to form a congregation and the new parish was named St. Cuthbert after an English bishop of the 7th Century.

We began holding services in the Sundre United Church on Sunday afternoons in space graciously provided free of charge by that congregation. In 1971, in cooperation with the Anglican Diocese of Calgary, a church building was moved from Penhold to Sundre, but not until the roof and upper wall had to be cut off in order to fit under the overpasses on Hwy #2! The lot at 602 1st Street NE was purchased for the building.

Some folks who had been associated with the parish in Penhold requested that their parish name "St. George" be retained, so the parish became known as "St. Cuthbert & St. George" in Sundre.

When the building arrived, rain came, so a large tarp had to be stretched over the lower part of the sanctuary. In due time, the building was put back together. An addition was put on the west end, and services have been held from there ever since.

We were guided at the beginning by Father Jim Linster and were part of a four-point parish with St. John's – Olds, St. George's – Harmattan, and St. Cyprian's Didsbury. In 1987 Father Jim moved to Ireland and Roy Foord became our parish priest for a time in the now 2-point parish along with St. John's – Olds. Father James Robinson came in 1990 and served until 1997, when he moved on to Lethbridge; it was at this time that we became a stand-alone parish.

We have been pleased to serve our Lord in our community from that beginning time in 1970 and will continue to do so by His guiding into the future.



St. Cuthbert & St. George Anglican Church

1971 Newsmakers

Striking a Bargain

Meat Prices

At Wrigley's Mayfair Foods in September, ground beef was priced at 59 cents a pound; sausage cost 39 cents a pound;

round steak was an enviable 89 cents a pound and smoked picnic hams weighed in at 39 cents a pound.

Teachers on Strike

In December, teachers in the County of Mountain View were out on strike.

Benevolent Group Active Since 1972

Sundre and District Lions Club

The Sundre and District Lions Club were chartered on November 16, 1972. Among the charter members were Bill Smith – President; Jim Packer – 1st Vice President; Bill Iebert – 2nd Vice President; Len Hengen – 3rd Vice President; Ron Hilts – Secretary; George Toone – Treasurer; Len Rushka – Tail Twister and Phil Philipoff – Lion Tamer. Joe Henze, who managed the Sundre Hotel for many years and who has served as a Town Councilor on several occasions, is also a charter member of the Sundre Lions Club.

The Lions strive to help those in need, wherever the need exists. The Lions motto all over the world is “We Serve”, and Sundre Lions certainly live up to this statement, both within our community and internationally. Some of the recipients of local Lions Club donations throughout the years have been the Kidney Foundation; Victims of Violence services; special needs benefits; swimming pool fund; school bursaries; STARS; youth camps; the Sundre Historical Society and many others.

For many years, Lions Clubs throughout the world have been involved in a project called Lions for Sight, which focuses on the restoration of vision for hundreds of thousands of people in 3rd World countries, and for individuals in need, through cataract surgeries and recycled eye glasses. The Lions are also very committed to sight research and have raised a great deal of money towards this cause. Financial support for Seeing Eye Dog training is another aspect of the clubs’ dedication to Lions For Sight. Sundre Lions Club has always been active in this worthwhile project.

An ongoing source of funding for the local Lions Club comes from the “Lions Shack”. The Shack is a permanent fixture at the Sundre Stampede Grounds, serving burgers, pop and chips during the annual three-day pro-rodeo event.

A Sundre Lioness Club was formed in November 1995. The combined volunteer service of these two clubs assures ongoing commitment to humanitarian causes at the local and international level.

Another Great Achievement Sundre and Area Community

Sundre Skating Arena “Seed Money” was \$1,000.00

It all started one day in the mid to late 1960s in the Sundre Hardware Store, which by that time was located on Centre Street North and run by Bob Rankin. A few people were discussing the need for an enclosed arena and Steve Davidchuck, a teacher who had just moved to town, happened to be present at the time.

Acknowledging that an arena was a much-needed facility, he offered his services to help get the project off the ground and was instrumental in forming the original Arena Committee.

Sundre and area residents had enjoyed an outdoor skating rink for many years. Built during the time when Nate Ellithorpe ran the Sundre Creamery, during the 1930s and 1940s, the rink, located just south of the creamery building, had provided many hours of fun and entertainment and was home to several hockey teams. Unfortunately, with Sundre often experiencing a procession of Chinooks during the winter months, there was no guarantee that the ice would be available at any given time and games and/or public skating often had to be cancelled. An indoor arena would go a long way in solving some of the problems associated with an unreliable ice surface.

The original members of the Indoor Arena Committee included Steve Davidchuck, Sam Campkin, Oscar Bennett, Albert Hoffner, George Overguard and Bob Rankin.

The Sundre Minor Hockey Club held a banquet in March 1967, which raised a thousand dollars. The money was set aside, earmarked as seed

money for an enclosed arena, but for two years no further action was taken. By 1969, after the forming of the committee, fund-raising efforts took off with great enthusiasm and some interesting and very entertaining events began to take place. One of these involved a professional wrestling competition, held on November 15th. Not to be outdone by the big name competitors, Sam "Killer" Campkin and Myron "Tiger" Thompson staged their own match at this event. It was a very close call as to which of the two was made of "champion material", but in the end, after fifteen minutes of enduring good natured cheers, jeers and laughter from the crowd, the grunts and heavy breathing came to an end as the referee called a tie! Seven hundred and fifty dollars was raised for the arena at this event.

Also in November of 1969, a fund raising walkathon was held. Two hundred and fifty-six walkers gathered pledges before setting out from the Sundre School on the sixteen-mile course. Mrs. Alice Ellithorpe, mother of Nate Ellithorpe, who had done so much to bring public skating and hockey to Sundre with the outdoor arena, was last to cross the Sundre Bridge on the home stretch. However, this was an excellent achievement, given that Alice was seventy-two years old at the time and many of the other walkers were in their prime! The youngest walker was Rick Johnston, aged six, and the gutsiest was grade eight student, Marion Henry, who walked eight miles on an artificial leg. Ten thousand dollars was collected in pledges following this event.

Many people remember Bob Rankin as being one of the most dedicated of fund-raisers and arena supporters. Bob was totally committed to the cause and in the words of his former fund raising team member, Sam Campkin, "Bob Rankin was possibly the main reason the fund raising was so successful. He worked with a passion and at one point took on the task of a solo fundraiser for a fifty-mile walkathon. He walked from Sundre to Cremona and back. I don't know how much money he raised, but Gary Vooy's and I both agree that Bob was the hardest working fund raiser for the project."

A big community auction was held at a later date, which further added to the fund, and many donations started coming in from businesses and individuals.

Russ Matwychuk was on Council when the arena group first approached the Town with their

proposal. He was somewhat doubtful about the project and said he wouldn't vote for it unless the group raised \$35,000.00. A second Walkathon was planned, but Russ was not optimistic about the amount of money it could bring in. He guessed it would raise about \$4,000.00. The actual amount raised was \$18,000.00! Not only that, but Mr. Matwychuk, who was a teacher at that time, had agreed to be a participant and he not only walked the course, but he was the top money maker, with pledges totalling more than \$1,000.00. Oscar Bennett raised the second highest amount and Bob Rankin took third place.

When the Arena Fund reached \$50,000.00, the Town of Sundre set up a Building Committee. Steve Davidchuck was still very involved in the project and agreed to be on this committee. In turn, the committee began looking around for a builder. A Strathmore contractor agreed to build the facility for \$50,000.00. However, Town Council indicated it would be more appropriate if the arena were to be constructed by local people. The Building Committee conceded on this matter and it wasn't long before construction began, with Sid Doyle selected as the main contractor. Sid donated countless hours of volunteer labour, and the local oil companies also stepped up to the plate, donating an enormous amount of work through contract labour crews. The main arches for the building were purchased from Wilson Arch Company in Calgary. Unfortunately, before the building was completed, the funds ran out and everything came to a grinding halt. The group who had worked so hard to see the completion of the arena were gravely disappointed but began to discuss more fund-raising options. In the meantime, local resident and committee member, George Overguard, began making enquiries about the possibility of forming an agricultural society in the Sundre area. If the community qualified, such a society could help substantially with acquiring government grants for the benefit of the arena. As it turned out, Sundre did qualify and the Sundre and District Agricultural Society was soon up and running. Its first order of business was to apply for whatever funding was available to help with the completion of the arena. The first grant awarded for this purpose totalled \$17,000.00. It was a big boost to the morale of the organizers and the community, and to the fund raising account. Construction of the arena got back on track, as did community fund-raising efforts.

Ultimately, the cost of building the Sundre Arena was \$100,000.00 - double the original estimate. Many individuals and groups contributed to make it a reality, both in time and money, and the result was a facility, officially opened in 1972, that was a real asset to the community. Minor Hockey really took off once the teams had relatively dependable ice to play on, and the Sundre Figure Skating Club was born as a direct result of having an indoor arena.

Several years later, it was with some surprise to the Town and to the County of Mountain View that an examination of the property title revealed that the arena had not been built on Town property, as assumed, but on land belonging to the County! The County was not aware they owned this land and was just as surprised as the Town was when it all came to light! Myron Thompson was Mayor of Sundre at this time and the two councils were forced to come up with some creative negotiating in order to resolve the dilemma. In the end, an agreement was reached whereby the Town deeded land housing the Sundre ball diamonds, at the base of Snake Hill, to the County, while the County in turn handed over the arena land to the Town!

In 1974, a short time prior to the discovery of the mix up in land ownership, it became apparent that the natural ice surface in the arena, although a great improvement on outdoor ice, was still not of a consistent enough quality to ensure a

full season of skating. Myron Thompson, who was chairman of the Recreation Board at that time, convinced Sundre area newcomer, Rod Rosevear, that artificial ice would be a huge asset to the arena and to the community. Rod, along with town resident, Jim Peters, made up a loosely formed fund raising committee and began what would prove to be a long, hard and stressful battle to bring the Sundre Arena up to modern ice surface standards.

The Town of Sundre did not support the artificial ice project because of ongoing conflict with the County of Mountain View over inequities in financial support for recreation, and a reluctance to place a bigger tax burden on Sundre residents; the County didn't want it because they didn't want to put tax dollars towards it either, or towards the ongoing operation once the ice was installed. Some members of the Sundre Agricultural Society did not support it because they saw the installation of a smooth concrete floor as being hazardous to livestock at any agricultural functions held at the arena during the summer months. Even many local individuals and businesses did not support the installation of artificial ice, and letters to the editor, both pro and con, flooded the pages of the Sundre Round Up for an extended period of time.

Despite all the controversy, fund raising was ongoing and moneys were placed in an Artificial Ice Fund account at the Bank of Montreal. The project certainly had its supporters as well as its detractors. One fund-raising approach was to in-



The Sundre Arena 2007

vite the public to purchase virtual square footage of concrete for the floor. Many students from the Sundre schools contributed, willingly giving up their allowances and the contents of piggy banks to the cause.

Although it ultimately took a plebiscite to give the green light for installation of artificial ice, eventually things started to come together and fundraising efforts reached a new level: On April 20, 1977 a cabaret was held at the Elks Hall, with Roger and the Country Fever providing the music. Three months later, a community auction raised \$4,000. Albert Hoffner, who was a dedicated supporter of several local recreational projects, presented the Artificial Ice Committee with a cheque for \$1,500.00 on behalf of Home Oil. Artificial ice enthusiasts, including business, corporations and individuals, threw their support behind the project and the fund began to grow. Recreation grants became available and volunteer support was considerable. But the delays caused by the opposition to the project proved costly: In 1974, an estimate for completion of the entire artificial ice project came in at one hundred and five thousand dollars. Three years later, when the project was finally completed, the construction costs actually amounted to over two hundred thousand dollars. The final figure would have been even higher had it not been for an unfortunate occurrence in Calgary: Rod Rosevear's wife, Sandra, was the daughter of the man who was president of the Calgary Curling Club at that time, and when their curling facility was destroyed by fire, the club salvaged the ice making plant and sold it to the Sundre group at a bargain price of seven thousand dollars. Had the fund-raisers had to purchase a new plant, it would have cost tens of thousands of dollars more.

November 15th, 1977 was a great day for the community, when master of ceremonies, Chris Marfleet, introduced several guest speakers at the Grand Opening of Artificial Ice at the Sundre Arena. Among the speakers were Bob Rankin, who had been actively involved with arena projects for many years; Peter Taylor, representing Parks and Wildlife, and Myron Thompson, Mayor of Sundre and President of the Recreation Board. Free coffee and donuts were available for the public and Brian Pockar, an up and coming young figure skater who had recently placed 2nd in the Men's Canadian Figure Skating Championships, gave an inspiring and much appreciated performance on

the new ice. Once again, Sundre and area residents and groups had proved that, despite numerous hurdles and delays, where there was a will, there was a way – "The Little Town That Could" had determinedly chugged its way to the top of the hill once again.

Rod Rosevear eventually became Chairman of the Sundre and District Recreation Board and served in that capacity for fifteen years.

The arena, with its new artificial ice, was a great hit in the community and many children, adults and groups enjoyed the skill enhancing opportunities it provided. However, operational costs soon proved to be an issue, and by September 1980 the arena had accrued a serious deficit and was under threat of closure. A special public meeting was called to address the problem, but a very poor turnout left organizers very concerned about the level of community support. Several members of the Sundre and District Recreation Board were present at the meeting, along with Town Councillors. The County of Mountain View (now Mountain View County), which provided a measure of funding for recreation in Sundre, had been invited to attend but did not.

The concern of Town Council was that for ten years the taxpayers of Sundre had subsidized the area recreation deficit through taxation. The arena deficit alone for the 1979-1980 year was thirty thousand dollars. An increase in the School Requisition Tax was adding an even greater burden for taxpayers, and Council came to the decision that residents could no longer be expected to carry the brunt of the Recreation Tax. At that time the tax stood at twenty mills. County residents were only paying two mills towards the recreation fund, sixty-nine percent of which went to the arena. As County residents made up the majority of Sundre recreation facility users, Council felt strongly that the Town Recreation Tax should be reduced by seventeen mills and that a user pay system should be introduced across the board, with Town and County residents paying the same fees. The Town suggested the cost of an annual family season ticket should be set at two hundred and fifty dollars, but this proposal did not sit well with the general public, and the Rec. Board was very concerned that such measures would result in the closure of the arena. An ad hoc committee, formed by concerned arena users and chaired by Neil Vanderzwan, addressed the meeting. Presenting its findings to the Recreation Board, the committee reported that the

only way to proceed appeared to be through a user pay system. Other suggestions were offered, such as running the concession booth on a volunteer basis, manning the gate voluntarily at hockey games, and charging a larger fee for summer use of the arena building. Despite the committee's confidence that these measures could result in a ten to fifteen thousand dollar reduction in the deficit, Mayor Thompson expressed serious doubts that they would be enough.

A week later, it was announced by Recreation Board Chairman, Will Phillips, that the arena would remain open and that the cost of season tickets would be eighty dollars for adults, sixty dollars for students, and one hundred and forty dollars for a family pass.

The seriousness of the situation regarding recreation funding for Sundre facilities led to a cancellation of the Recreational Agreement with the County and, eventually, to guidelines being put in place for a new agreement, which would see a more equitable division of financial support between the municipalities.

In 2008, the Sundre Arena is owned and operated by the Town of Sundre, with the concession areas and front end operated by volunteers. The building, now thirty-six years old, remains one of Sundre's most utilized recreational facilities. The Town of Sundre is presently conducting a needs assessment in order to gather information for the design and building phase of a new arena and recreation complex.

1974 Newsmakers

Streaks and Freaks

Streaker Causes a Stir

At 9:45 p.m. on Thursday April 4, an unidentified person "streaked" through the bar of the Sundre Hotel wearing only a facemask and shoes.

Freak Storm Hits Sundre

On the night of April 26, a freak storm swept through Sundre and area result-

ing in power outages that lasted several days.

Secretary-Treasurer Resigns

Arthur Ogden, Secretary-Treasurer to the Town of Sundre since April, 1966, resigned from his position in May due to ill health.

Sundre Revelstoke Lost in Fire

On June 25, fire completely destroyed the sawmill and planer at Sundre Revelstoke. (Sundre Revelstoke was located for many years on the east side of the Red Deer River on the Bergen Road.)

Crocuses Bloom in Fall

In October, Mrs. Harvey Davis reported seeing a profusion of crocuses blooming in the Dogpound Creek area.

Caveny Mayor by Acclamation

On October 16, Bert Caveny became Mayor of Sundre by acclamation, replacing previous Mayor, Neil Vanderzwan.

E.C.S. Opens its Doors to Sundre Youngsters

Early Childhood Services began in Sundre in the fall.

1975 Newsmakers

New Faces and Old Friends

Town Welcomes First Veterinarian

Dr. Terry Hunt became Sundre's first active veterinarian when he moved to the community with his wife and small daughter in June. His first clinic was in a room at the back of the old Marshall Wells building, which was located in the

vicinity of where Short Stop Food and Gas now stands.

Rod Macleod Leaves Sundre for Victoria

Former Sundre Mayor and recently retired businessman, Rod Macleod, and his wife, Isobel, left Sundre in August to live in Victoria, BC.

Thirty-Three Years In The Community

Sundre Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses

The Sundre Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses was formed in 1975 and consisted of nineteen members. The first meetings were held in Rod Langstaff's house, then Findlay and Susan White's house.

When the congregation outgrew the room in the houses, the old Legion Hall was rented.

Construction of the first Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses began in July 1977 a little south on the Bergen Road, and the dedication took place on May 27th, 1979. By this time the congregation had grown to over one hundred members.

By 2007, the congregation had outgrown the Kingdom Hall and a new one was built on the west end of Sundre.

The dictionary describes "making history" this way: "to do something important enough to be recorded". In the summer of 2007, the Sundre Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses made history. From having only the floor pad in place, it took just ten days to complete the building project! Trades from all over Alberta volunteered their time and expertise. One man asked, "do we as a congregation owe hours of work toward other Jehovah's Witness projects?" He was pleasantly surprised to hear there was no pay back – that all the visitors were indeed volunteers.

As a congregation, Jehovah's Witnesses are organized to do the same preaching work that Jesus did in the first century CE, so today you will find members of Sundre Congregation still engaged in that work in our town of Sundre.



The First Kingdom Hall on the Bergen Road



The New Kingdom Hall in SW Sundre

Dr. Terry Hunt Pioneers Veterinary Services

Veterinarian Called Sundre Home at the Age of Eight

Terry Hunt was born in Innisfail, Alberta, in 1948. His parents, Roy and Helen Hunt, moved the family, which included Terry and his younger sister, Sherry, to the James River Bridge area in 1954 and set up a mixed farming enterprise on three quarters of land. On the thirty acres that were broken, the Hunts set up a small herd of cattle along with a few head of horses. According to Roy, the horses were - "to insure we wouldn't make too much money!" Roy, who hailed from

Saskatchewan and was a bricklayer by trade, built fireplaces in the locality to augment the family's farming income.

As a young boy, Terry attended the James River School. His great love of animals was already apparent and his parents suggested quite early in Terry's life that his future might lie in veterinary medicine. Roy Hunt, who had a broad understanding of the ways of nature, was a shrewd counselor to his children: Terry remembers finding what he thought was an abandoned or orphaned fawn. He rushed to ask his dad if he could bring it home and raise it. Roy advised leaving the fawn alone for the time being, but told his son that if its mother hadn't returned for it by later in the day, the family would adopt it. Terry was probably disappointed when he returned to the location some hours later and found the fawn was no longer there, but he hasn't forgotten the thrill of that unexpected encounter or the sage guidance of his father.

When the James River School closed its doors in 1958, Terry began riding the school bus to Crammond, where he attended school to grade eight. By the time he transferred to high school in Caroline he had firmly set his sights on becoming a veterinarian. Roy and Helen were totally supportive of Terry's career choice and encouraged him in every possible way. Unfortunately, Roy Hunt did not live to see his oldest child graduate in 1966. In December 1964, only three years after the birth of the couple's second son, Brooke, tragedy struck the family when Roy suffered a fatal heart attack, leaving Helen to raise their family alone. For two years, Helen, with the help of her father-in-law, worked hard to keep the farm going, but eventually made the decision to return to Innisfail with Brooke and Sherry. The farm machinery was sold and the land and cattle were rented out. Terry, by this time, was pursuing his own future and living independently.

Following his graduation and around the time his mom moved to Innisfail, Terry went north for a year to work for a seismographic drilling company. In the fall of 1967 he enrolled at the University of Calgary to begin his pre-veterinary studies.

It was while he was attending university that Terry met Marianne Daudey. Marianne, a bacteriology student and budding artist, was born in Holland. Her family immigrated to Canada in 1956.

The couple married following graduation in 1970, and when Terry was accepted into the West-

ern College of Veterinary Medicine, they moved to Saskatoon. Sadly, a second tragedy befell the Hunt family in the summer of that year when Terry's mom passed away following a serious illness. Brooke was only nine years old at the time and Terry and Marianne quickly decided that they would become his legal guardians. It was an awesome responsibility for a young couple to take on, but they did so with the strength and dedication that would become the hallmark of their relationship, and of the future they would build together.

The young family lived in Saskatoon until Terry's graduation in 1974, at which time Terry accepted a position in a dairy practice in St. Pierre, Manitoba. A year later, Dr. Bill Machel offered Terry a position with Olds Veterinary Service. In the meantime, Don Petersen, a Sundre resident employed by the Provincial Government, made contact and encouraged Terry to consider starting a veterinary practice of his own in Sundre. As it turned out, the Hunts were unable to find accommodation in the Olds area, so Terry never did take the position with Dr. Machel. Instead, on June 6th, 1975, Terry and Marianne, along with Brooke and the Hunt's little daughter, Tara, arrived in Sundre.

Pioneer Veterinary Services began operating out of the back room of the Marshall Wells building, then owned by Roy and Ruby Stewart, which, until the hardware store was destroyed by fire, was located where Short Stop Food Store now stands.

Pioneer Vet. was the first veterinary practice to be opened in Sundre, but Terry wasn't the first veterinarian in the area. More than sixty years earlier, Doctor William McMurtry, his wife, Mary, and their five children began homesteading in the Bearberry Valley. The doctor retired from his veterinary work in Olds shortly after making the move to the Sundre area.

1975 wasn't an ideal time for Terry to start his business, which initially focussed on large animal practice. To begin with, the cattle market had cratered. On top of that the exotic cattle market, which had seemed to hold such early promise, was not doing well. Livestock producers were struggling and were cutting costs wherever they could. Local veterinary services were a new option for them and, with their falling profit margins, not one they took to with much enthusiasm. Consequently, those early months were very difficult for the Hunts. They had borrowed money from the bank to start the practice, but had been unable to acquire additional financing to buy a home. Even-

tually, an uncle loaned them the money they needed to build a house in Sundre and it was ready to move into by 1976.

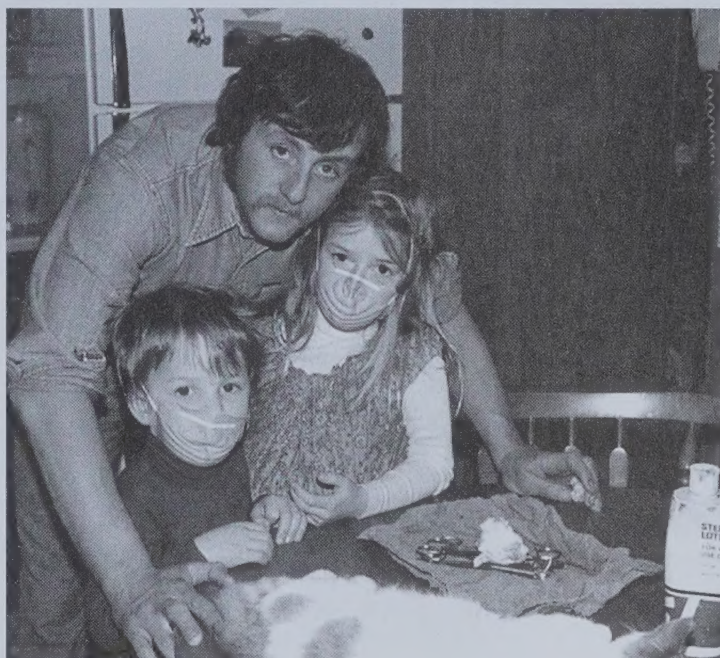
By the spring of 1976, things had turned around somewhat and the future was looking brighter for Pioneer Vet. At this time, Terry welcomed Dr. Don Armitage into the practice and he would remain with Terry until 1985. It was also around this time that the practice was relocated to the former Zim's Mini Mart building, which was owned by Everett and Rose Vennard. The expanded space and more central location were a great improvement on the previous quarters, but another move would take place in 1979 when Terry was given the opportunity to purchase the old Rod Macleod home, which is now Outlaws Restaurant and Swamp Donkey's Pub. At the time, local developers, Reinhardt and Beverly Luking owned the property. After Pioneer Veterinary Services took title, the building was renovated to meet the needs of the practice.

In 1977 Terry and his family, which now included a little son, Roy, relocated to the Hunt family farm at James River Bridge. For the Hunt brothers, life had come full circle and they were able to realize the dream their parents had shared so many years before. A new home was built on the property and a purebred Red Angus cattle operation was developing nicely. Marianne, a very creative individual, was kept very busy with the children, the farm, and her responsibilities as the wife of a veterinarian, but she found time to enjoy a variety of arts and crafts projects and to expand her talents as an artist.

By 1979, Brooke had graduated from high school and had been accepted into the University of Alberta to study Forestry. Pioneer Veterinary Services was doing very well; life was good. But in the midst of it all came tragedy. Brooke, who had become such a beloved member of the family during the nine years Terry and Marianne had been married, was working on the rigs to earn money for his college tuition. He was returning from work one day and was involved in a motor vehicle accident that took his life. It was a devastating blow for the family. Brooke had been much more than a brother and uncle: He had been like a son to Terry and Marianne and the family continues to miss his good-natured and familiar presence in their lives.

Terry is a self-confessed "Type A" personality and he credits some of his achievements in life to

the hard work ethic that developed from his early introduction to family responsibility. More than anything, though, he acknowledges the "three strong women" in his life - his grandmother, his mother, and in particular, his wife, as being the real catalysts behind his success. His mom and his grandmother always believed in, and encouraged, the dreams of his youth. His wife, Marianne, whom Terry describes as a "very strong and independent woman" provided support and encouragement throughout the years, that not only helped him immeasurably in his career as a veterinarian, but enabled him to pursue and realize many other dreams as well. As Terry puts it: "With the support of Marianne, and hard work, I have achieved more than I ever thought I could."



Doctor Terry Hunt, Assisted by His Children, Tara and Roy, Performing a Kitchen Table Procedure on the Family Cat in 1988.

Photo courtesy of Terry and Marianne Hunt

Throughout the 1980's, Pioneer Veterinary Services continued to increase its client base and by the end of the decade it had become a very successful business, supplying veterinary expertise and services to both the small and large animal sectors and covering an increasingly extended rural area. It became obvious that it was, once again, time to relocate to an improved facility. This time, Terry started from the ground up. In 1990, a brand new clinic was constructed on the west side of town, where it remains, under different ownership, today. Terry also opened a small clinic in Caroline to better serve the needs of ranchers and

pet owners in that area. With the expanded quarters came a pressing need for more doctors and over the next ten years the practice grew to include several more veterinarians. Among these were Lorne Waldner in 1990, Uli Schmiemann in 1993, and Michael Wilson and Kelly Loree in 1999. Dr. Schmiemann and Dr. Wilson are now the two principal partners of Pioneer Veterinary Services.



Doctor Terry Hunt & Beagle Patient in 1991.

Photo courtesy of Terry and Marianne Hunt

In the year 2000, the Sundre clinic underwent a major expansion and renovation. The little clinic Terry had originally established in the back room of the Marshall Wells building with little more than a wing and a prayer as collateral had, in twenty-five years, grown into a lucrative, fully modern facility with sophisticated diagnostic and treatment options that could rival many larger practices.

With the assistance provided by his associates, who had, by then, been joined by Dr Gina McLachlan, Terry found himself with more time available to pursue other interests. From 1985 - 1988, he had been on the council of the Alberta Veterinary Medicine Association (AVMA). In 1989, he was elected Alberta Representative to the Canadian Veterinary Medicine Association (CVMA),

and in 1995-96 became President of this Association. This position offered the Hunts the opportunity to travel to various places around the world and, with their children pretty well grown up; they were able to do this.

Five years later, Terry accepted a position that resulted in a two-year stint in Western China on a China/Canada Integrated Dairy Cattle project. It was a wonderful opportunity to share animal health practices in a foreign country that was rapidly becoming a major player in the world economy and to experience, first hand, a culture that was very different from that of Canada. But there were some major decisions to be made if Terry was to accept the position.

And so it was that, prior to leaving Canada for work in Beijing and Shanghai in January, 2002, the ownership of Pioneer Veterinary Services was passed to Doctors Schmiemann, Wilson and Loree, marking the end of an era for Terry and Marianne, but also paving the way for many new adventures.

For Terry Hunt, following a career in veterinary medicine was never primarily about making a lot of money. His passion, perhaps dating back to that day when, as a child, he discovered the little fawn on his parent's farm, has always been in caring for animals. His enjoyment in that, and in the friendships he made along the way, has always been his greatest reward. Terry strongly believes that if you are in business doing what you love to do, the business will look after you. He has seen many changes over the years and while he accepts the inevitability and necessity of progress, he misses the simplicity and neighbourliness of the past. Farming, once an uncomplicated lifestyle choice for many families, has become a competitive business venture in which only the hardest souls survive. There is less time now for chatting over a friendly cup of coffee after the safe delivery of a foal, or for hanging over the fence and watching the cows plod contentedly back to pasture after milking. For the most part, the easy-going pace of yesteryear, where the vet on call was welcomed as a member of the family, and often offered "lunch" at three in the morning, is gone forever. Of course, some changes have been for the better and Terry is the first to acknowledge these: Improved handling facilities, four wheel drive vehicles, cell phones, computer technology – these and other advances have made a huge contribution to the business of farming and to the liveli-

hood of rural veterinarians.

Although Terry no longer owns Pioneer Veterinary Services, his life remains full and satisfying: He continues to travel to China and various places around the world to teach, instruct and lecture on veterinary practice and related issues. Marianne has also found great satisfaction in life through her shared experiences with Terry and through her personal journey to professional recognition of her talents as an artist. She and Terry share a special pride in the successes of their daughter, Tara, and son, Roy, and are equally proud of their four grandchildren.

For Terry, there are many special memories of his years as a country vet – lots of them happy, some sad, and many of them so funny their retelling will very possibly bring forth a chuckle for many years into the future. Terry and Marianne shared a few of these humorous stories for posterity:

Special Colostrum – Marianne's Favourite "Vet Story"

Terry remembers being called out to a late night calving at a neighbour's place about twenty years ago. The neighbour was new to farming and her knowledge of animal husbandry was quite limited. On returning home, Terry told Marianne what had happened, adding that he'd given the neighbour a bag of their frozen colostrum. This seemed odd to Marianne because she was pretty sure there had been no colostrum left in the freezer. However, they agreed there must have been a bag left from the year before.

In the middle of the night, the neighbour with the new calf called – she was having trouble getting the lumps out of the milk. Terry advised her to "Heat it slowly and keep stirring," – then proceeded to go back to sleep. A short time later, the phone rang again. The neighbour still couldn't get the lumps out of the colostrum. "Keep stirring," Terry again advised.

On stopping in on the client some time later, the puzzle of the persistently lumpy colostrum was solved when Terry noticed a decidedly "fruity" smell to the "milk". At that point, the red-faced doctor had to admit to his neighbour that what he had given her for the baby calf's first meal was, in fact, a bag of frozen peaches! Apparently, Marianne, when processing the fruit, had marked the bags of peaches with the date only, because, as

she puts it, "I knew they were peaches, I didn't need to write it on the bags!"

Well, Well, Well - What Do We Have Here?

One of the most unusual situations Terry ever experienced as a veterinarian occurred after farmers, Hobart and Joanne Lenz called to report a horse down their well shaft! The horse in question was notorious for its inquisitive personality and, apparently, it had wandered into the cramped quarters of the pump house to check things out. When it tried to turn around it somehow lost its footing and consequently fell into the well – butt first. Fortunately, the horse was not struggling and did not appear to be seriously injured. It remained very calm while Terry and the Lenzes tipped over the well house building and attached ropes to the animal's head and legs. A tractor and front-end loader were then used to carefully haul the animal out of its uncomfortable situation! A few scrapes and bruises, and perhaps an appropriate measure of equine embarrassment, were the worst of its injuries!

His Bite Was Definitely Worse Than His Bark

Although known to make gentle and loyal family pets and, ironically, to have a great sense of doggy humour, like all breeds related to the Bulldog, Staffordshire Bull Terriers can be very persistent in their aggression once they become agitated. They also have the notorious "locked jaw" response when engaged in combat.

An English Staffordshire Bull Terrier was brought to the clinic one day for examination of a lump that had developed under its chin. Terry, assisted by veterinarian, Norman Machel, and Animal Health Technician, Erin Machel, had the sedated dog on the examination table and were aspirating the lump when the animal suddenly leaped to the floor. It then lunged at Terry's ankle, latching on to the Achilles Tendon and clamping its jaws firmly shut. Norman began hitting the animal in an attempt to detach it from Terry's leg, but for the longest time, his efforts were futile. The dog was *not* letting go. Marianne happened to stop by the clinic at this time and she opened the door of the examination room and stuck her head in. On seeing the commotion inside, she very quickly withdrew, closing the door behind her! Eventually, the dog loosened its grip momentarily. The

two vets and technician took appropriate precautions to prevent further injury. This involved getting themselves out of harm's way. What Terry remembers so distinctly about this incident is not the pain he endured as a result of the attack, but rather the hilarious (in retrospect) experience of sharing the space on top of his examination table with two grown adults (Norman and Erin), while a feisty and totally unforgiving little dog stood guard with teeth barred and hair bristling, more than ready to latch on to any arm or leg that might become accessible. Whether it was a result of the sedative finally taking effect, or the superior cunning of the three humans, the animal eventually gave up its quest and the crew was able to escape. Norman hauled Terry off to hospital where his injuries were treated and sutured. Such are the adventures in the life of a veterinarian!

Porcupine "Tails"

Every rural veterinarian in Canada has at least one favourite porcupine story. These spiny, sedate and seemingly inoffensive creatures, have probably earned more treatment dollars for country practices than all other small animal injuries combined! Terry has two favourite stories: The first

involves a Doberman that was owned by a fellow who lived on a small acreage at Westward Ho, near Sundre. This gentleman worked in Calgary and only got home about every third night. Every time he returned home his big canine companion was waiting for him – and, likely as not, it would present itself with a face full of porcupine quills!

Dogs are pretty smart, they don't like pain, and they don't like veterinary clinics much either, so usually, if Terry or one of his fellow veterinarians removed quills from a dog's sensitive nose and lips, chances were pretty good that the same dog would not return for the same procedure again. Not so with the Doberman from Westward Ho. He was in the clinic for quill removal so often that he almost became a permanent fixture! And this dog didn't just get a few stray quills – most times his entire face and neck would be covered with hundreds of the tiny barbed weapons! Eventually, the animal exhausted his owner's patience, and likely his bank account too, and had to be put to sleep.

Now you would think that a *Border Collie*, with the highest ranking in the "Mensa" association for gifted and highly intelligent canines, would be the first dog to learn the porcupine lesson, if it ever had to be taught it in the first place. Not so with a *Border Collie* by the name of Rafter. Rafter certainly couldn't compete with the Doberman from Westward Ho as far as 'most quills collected' was concerned, but he did have a bad habit of sticking his nose into places where it didn't belong, collecting the odd souvenir in the process.

Rafter's owners just happened to be Terry and Marianne Hunt! The couple were somewhat perplexed when their dog showed up from time to time with just two or three quills extending from his nose. The mystery of where Rafter was picking up the quills was eventually solved when the Hunts discovered a young porcupine was spending part of each day under the steps that led up into the Hunt house. Rafter, being a good herding dog (but possibly a failed Mensa candidate!), kept sticking his nose between the steps in an effort to oust the errant creature. As time passed and Rafter continued to collect the odd quill or two, Terry began to consider killing the porcupine in order to resolve the problem. However, Marianne would not hear of it. The alternative solution was to physically remove the animal from the premises. This Terry achieved one night by scooping it into a drum then driving a mile down the road and de-



The Doberman that Never Learned His Lesson .

Photo courtesy of Terry and Marianne Hunt

positing the porcupine into heavy bush. A few days later, a neighbour, who just happened to live about a mile away from the Hunt farm, reported that his dog had recently tangled with a porcupine. Terry never did mention the part he might possibly have played in this unfortunate incident!



A More Recent Photo of Roy, Tara, Marianne and Terry Hunt. *Photo courtesy of Terry and Marianne Hunt*

Making A Commitment to Community Health

The Sundre Health Unit

In the early days of Sundre's history, long before the advent of immunization against childhood diseases and several decades before the development of antibiotics, the health of a family depended to a very large degree on luck. Most families who settled in this area around the turn of the twentieth century were poor, and while they grew their own food, raised their own meat, and probably ate quite well most of the time, sometimes crops failed and there was little available to feed for either families or livestock. Without adequate nutrition the ability to fight disease and infection decreased and children and adults often succumbed to conditions that barely even occur today. District Nurses, who travelled to the outlying communities on schedules that depended to a large

degree on the weather and the levels of the area's rivers, were not introduced until after the passing of the District Nurses Act in 1919. At that time, Alberta had the highest infant mortality rate in Canada.

District Nurses were trained to check the upper respiratory tract, to inspect teeth for decay and to look for signs of malnutrition. There were very few hospitals or medical clinics in Alberta at that time, so even with the arrival of the travelling nurses, apart from accepting advice, there was often little a family could do to speed healing or prevent death. The nurses received special training in obstetrics, and they were sometimes called upon to deliver babies. Mostly though, it would be a local woman who acted as midwife to her neighbours.

By the 1930s, doctors from Olds were making regular trips to Sundre, but in between these visits the community had to depend on its own resources. Nurse, Ethel Macleod, who moved to Sundre with her husband, John, in 1934, soon found herself taking care of many first aid emergencies and offering advice to those who were sick or who were the mothers of new babies.

By 1946, a year before John and Ethel Macleod retired to Calgary, Dr. Chauncy Miller set up a medical practice in Sundre, providing residents with ongoing care for many years. In 1965, Dr. Alan White arrived in Sundre with his family and started a practice. Three years later the Sundre Hospital was built. Sundre had come a long way from the days when medical assistance was almost non-existent, but it would be another nine years before the Sundre Hospital and Health Unit Boards were able to provide the town with permanent services specific to the care of infants and seniors.

In 1977, Mount View Health Unit, based in Didsbury, engaged a nurse who worked as a Community Health Nurse from the Sundre Hospital. Her services led to MVHU starting its own Sundre Clinic in the building now operated by Century 21 Alta West Realty. The official opening of this facility was held in December 1977.

The History of the Health Unit in Sundre

Article submitted by Verity Pickering

"Mount View Health Unit had its beginnings in Sundre in October 1977. Sharon Gostola was the RN hired full time to cover both Community Health and Home Care. The Health Unit was situ-

ated in a small back room in Dr. Alan White's medical clinic at that time, but on Wednesdays, Dr White's day off, the waiting room and the physician's examination room were used as immunization clinics.

Clerical staff was hired in November 1977. It was a part time position, but with increases in staff it would eventually become full time.

Over the years many RNs have come and gone, but the administration staff remained constant for close to twenty-five years.

In the 1980s Dr White moved to another building and the whole office became Mount View Health Unit, with the exception of the little room at the back, which was used as a storage area for the drug store next door. The pharmacist, Archie McKechnie was the owner of the whole building at that time.

When Sharon moved to Calgary to get married, her position was split and offered as part time Home Care Nurse, and full time Community Health Nurse. Once filled, these positions brought the staff up to three. A Mental Health worker came in one day a week, and two Home Support Aides were hired to work with Home Care clients. These two ladies are still working with the Health Unit, or Sundre Community Health Centre, as it is now known. Linda Fisher and Gwen Gunderson will be hard shoes to fill when and if they ever retire.

In the following few years, both the Home Care position and Community Health nursing position changed many times. One of the Home Care Nurses in 1986 was Bonnie Jones, who went on to become the Clinical Coordinator at the Sundre General Hospital and who in 2008 works in the same capacity as Site Leader.

In the early 1990s, big changes were in store for the three staff: The first was a move up to the Sundre General Hospital grounds, making it easier for the nursing staff to work with the hospital staff and doctors. A brand new modular office was installed for MVHU. At the time we thought we would never use all the space, but it didn't take long because of several new positions within the Health Unit. Soon we had an Occupational Therapist, a Physio Therapist, a Speech Therapist, two more Home Care nurses, another Community Health Nurse and one more Home Support Aide added to the staff.

Also in the early 1990s there was another big change: The province revamped the health regions, and Mount View Health Unit was taken into the

David Thompson Health Region, and became known as "Sundre Community Health Centre", although people still refer to it as the "Health Unit"

From a small little office with two staff, it has evolved into what it is today, a very busy office with more than twenty staff and two administration staff.

When the "Health Unit" first opened, the "Clinic Assistant", as the administration staff was called, was involved with a lot of the hands-on things to do with the babies and school children. Now, with the advances in computer technology, a vast majority of the administration work is data entry, but there is still a lot of involvement with the general public and the babies.

Many babies have been born within the last thirty-one years. Babies we saw at the Health Unit in the 1970s now have babies, toddlers and teenagers of their own."



Sundre Community Health Centre in 2007

1977 Newsmakers

New Game, New Truck and New Service

A New Game in Town

Tennis courts, sponsored by the Town of Sundre were installed west of the school close to the Rodeo Grounds.

Rural Fire Protection

In March, a fire truck was purchased for rural fire protection.

Community Health Services for Sundre

Mount View Health Unit opened its door in Sundre in December. The facility was located in the building that housed Dr. Alan White's medical practice, now Century 21 Alta West Realty.

Turning Back the Tide

1978 Meeting Paved the Way for Flood Control

Eighty-four years after David McDougall first set up camp in the Sundre area and sixty-two years after a devastating flood destroyed the bridges at Derbytown and Sundre, and sealed the fates of the two hamlets due to only the Sundre bridge being replaced, the government began to get serious about flood control for Sundre. Numerous floods had inundated the little Sundre community in the intervening years, although, as weather patterns moderated, these did become less frequent. The concern for Sundre in 1978 was that a one-in-one-hundred-year flood, a highly destructive flood, which, as its name suggests, is expected to occur about once in a hundred years, could be disastrous for the developing town. The Bearberry Creek was notorious for causing much of the downtown damage during a severe flood and because a system of dykes was already in the works for the Red Deer River, it became the main focus of concern at that time. The following report is taken from a Sundre Round Up article published in February 1978:

"On Monday, February 20th, a special meeting was held in the Sundre School to discuss the matter of flood control for Sundre.

Among those present were Bob Clark, MLA, county representative, Syd Vollmin (a member of the Flood Control Committee), Phil Newman of the Red Deer Regional Planning Commission, Chris Marfleet (Flood Control Committee), representatives from Alberta Environment and Alberta Transportation, Brisbin and Gates (Engineers), and two land owners with interest in the flood control proposals.

Members of Council present were Ken Smith, who chaired the meeting, George Pusey, Laurel Henze, Will Phillips and Ed Morgan, who was deputizing

as mayor in the absence of Mayor Thompson.

Councillor Smith began the meeting by informing those present of the two alternative proposals for flood control on the Bearberry Creek.

The first alternative is the one proposed by the flood control committee, to continue channelization of the creek from the existing channel to a point a mile or so west. This alternative is the one which, at the present time is favoured by Town Council and the Flood Control Committee, especially since, with this system, it would seem possible that a dyke/highway system could be incorporated.

The second alternative is the one previously suggested by Alberta Environment. This method would entail re-channelization of the creek to the south and around the town, down into the Red Deer River.

Mr. Ken Looten, a representative of Alberta Environment, discussed these two alternatives after first commenting on flood protection for the Red Deer River. He explained that protection of the Red would be a fairly straightforward matter, with a dyke system appearing to be the most feasible solution. Positioning of the dyke or dykes would not be decided upon until further surveys and studies had been conducted, but Mr. Looten felt there should not be many delays on this matter.

Surveying of the Bearberry Creek would be more difficult as, in this case, surveying could not begin until after spring break-up and run-off, which would possibly be the end of April.

Mr. Looten felt that alternative number one was feasible, though he stressed the need to look more fully at an area of the creek two and a half miles west of the existing town boundaries, where he felt there was a possibility of water spillage which might run to the south and east toward the town, defeating the object of any flood protection measures further downstream.

Regarding the second alternative, Mr. Looten commented that it was also a feasible solution, and that providing local landowners were agreeable to surveys being conducted, future investigation would not be eliminated.

The cost of either alternative would be over one million dollars, with alternative number two being slightly less expensive. Mr. Looten said cost was not the most important issue and that the number one priority of Alberta Environment was to provide flood protection to the existing town.

Mr. Phil Newman asked Mr. Looten what degree of protection would be gained by dyking the Red Deer River. He replied that there would be protection for existing properties only..."

What transpired from this meeting, as far as the Bearberry Creek was concerned, is that the creek bed was dredged and widened and the banks were built higher. A weir was also built to intercept the water flowing downstream. This took place in 1979 and, in the same time period, dykes were constructed on the east and west banks of the Red Deer River. This involved dumping 70,000 cubic metres of gravel, plus 40,000 cubic metres of clay in order to build the 2,700 metres of embankment, approximately ten feet high.

The construction of the Dickson Dam, known at the time as "site 6" and located downstream of Sundre, began in 1977. The Dickson Dam was officially opened on July 12, 1984. Alberta Premier Peter Lougheed was present at the event. Sundre Town Council and many area residents had been in favour of building the dam west of Coal Camp in a natural valley between two hills, but the Provincial Government made the decision to build the dam near Dixon, north-east of Sundre. As a concession to the community's ongoing concerns regarding flooding, the government picked up the tab for the dykes that were built on the river in Sundre and also the work done on the Bearberry Creek.

Despite all the flood protection measures taken, a devastating flood was in store for Sundre. It hit in 2005, with much of the damage to town properties occurring as a result of the Bearberry Creek overflowing its banks west of the Sundre community and coursing rapidly into the downtown area. The Red Deer River also overflowed, causing serious erosion to the banks in many areas. Studies are ongoing as various levels of government look for ways to stabilize the banks and control the massive amounts of gravel that recent floods have deposited in the river channels.

Seniors Unite for Recreation

Sundre West Country Centre

Plans for a Senior Citizen Recreation Centre began in November 1977. Championed by the Sundre and District Recreation Board and supported by many local organizations, including the Sundre Legion, Sundre Elks, Sundre Royal Purple, Sundre Lions Club and the Sundre and District Chamber of Commerce, the building of the centre was anticipated with much enthusiasm by

Sundre's two senior's groups – the Sunshine Club and the Happy Seniors. To meet the requirements for financial assistance from the Provincial Government, these two groups amalgamated in February 1978 and became the Sundre & District Senior Citizens Club. The board of directors of this newly formed club were: Herb Miller, President; Bill Somers, Vice President; Mabel Waldroff, 2nd Vice President; Jessie McIntosh, Secretary; and Millie Haynes, Treasurer. Frank Overguard headed the Steering Committee for the centre, and among other dedicated volunteers were Guy Haynes and Dave Burke. Millie Haynes, daughter of one of pioneer David McDougall's first employees, Jack Smith, and presently living in the Foothills Lodge, served in her position as Treasurer for twenty years.

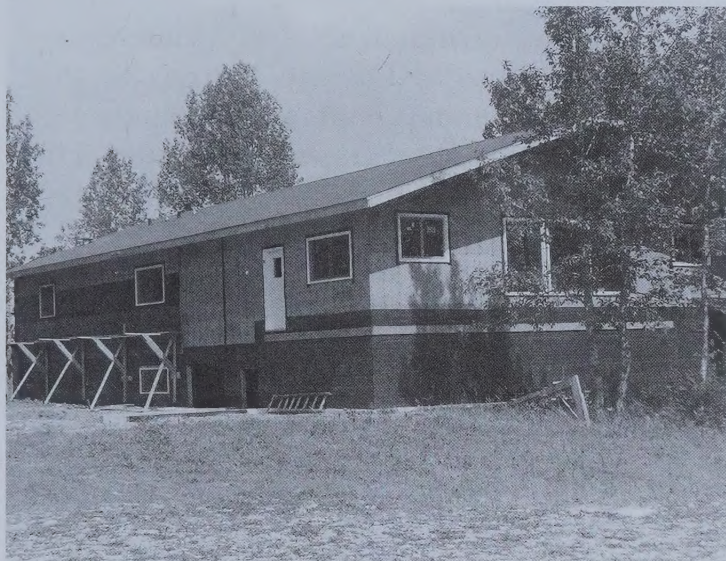
An open forum was held in the Elks Hall on April 3, 1978 to inform the public of the government assistance available for a project of this type, with various guest speakers from government and from the community in attendance. There was an excellent turnout, with Dennis Ratcliff chairing the meeting. In all, two hundred and fifty community members over the age of fifty had responded to a questionnaire regarding preferences about the building of the centre and the activities to take place within it. The excellent response enabled the steering committee to make plans regarding the direction of the project. Mayor Myron Thompson, while offering Town Council's support for the project, advised that no funding would be available through the Town. However, he suggested that the Town was willing to help in other ways, perhaps with the donation of a parcel of Town land. At that time, it appeared that matching grant moneys, from the Department of Recreation, Parks and Wildlife, would be available, subject to certain conditions.

By mid 1978, fund raising efforts for the construction of a Senior's Recreation Centre were well underway. A slow pitch tournament, organized by Art Smith, was held in August of that year and it raised nearly fourteen hundred dollars through entry fees, gate receipts, concession receipts, a raffle, and donations. Eight town and community teams took part in the tournament and these included the CKRD team from Red Deer, who won the B side event. Bob Clark's Social Creditors team was the A side winner. A second slow pitch tournament was held in August 1979.

Auction Sales were held and one in 1979, operated by True Auction Services, which was owned

by Morris Fisher, Dale Belt and Don Wudel, raised \$2,300, the largest amount raised to that date. There were generous donations from individuals, businesses and oil companies.

The contract for the construction of the building was awarded to Sid Doyle.



Sundre West Country Centre Under Construction. *Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum*

After the centre opened on July 1, 1980, Vi Phillips became head of the fundraising committee. She was a dedicated volunteer and frequently went the extra mile to make sure the centre had everything it needed to make it a great place for seniors, and for non-seniors who rented the building for special functions.

Since that time, the Seniors Recreation Hall, now known as the Sundre West Country Centre, has not only given local seniors a place for recreation and social activity, but has hosted hundreds of meetings and social events. It has been utilized as a venue for entertainment, receptions, shows and displays, and has served as a polling station. For the seniors, there is carpet bowling, floor curling, bocce ball, card parties, musical evenings and potluck lunches. In the basement, seniors can enjoy a variety of craft making opportunities.

With changing times and a new generation of seniors coming of age, the focus of the West Country Centre is changing to some extent. Built when an older generation still enjoyed old-time social gatherings, which included card parties, musical evenings, crafts and games, the centre has served an important purpose for close to thirty years. Many of today's "new seniors" enjoy a different lifestyle than that of their predecessors: They

travel more extensively and often have homes in a warmer climate for the winter season; they have computers and the Internet for entertainment and for keeping in touch with family and friends in distant places; due to advances in modern medicine, they are generally healthier and perhaps a little wealthier too. A generation of World War Two babies, and the Baby Boomers that followed the war, are about to challenge just about every former notion of retirement and aging, and this is already having an effect on the membership of such places as the Sundre West Country Centre. With falling seniors numbers, the centre relies more on rental income to pay the bills than it used to. Despite this, it will no doubt continue to fill a need for older area residents for many more years.



Sundre West Country Centre in 2008

A Full House for Nearly Thirty Years

Peak Theatre Players a Resounding Success

People of all cultures, all age groups and all backgrounds have always been drawn to the dramatization of real life in the form of live theatre. Despite the advent of movies and television, and the more recent entertainment opportunities of the Internet, we still like to gather together to watch real people portray the tragedy, humour and adventure that is life.

Live entertainment has existed in Sundre for

almost as long as there has been settlement. Pioneering families often gathered for musical evenings at the homes of friends and neighbours, and as the community grew and groups such as the Women's Institute, the Legion, Elks and Royal Purple were formed, plays involving local actors were sometimes put on as fund-raisers for these organizations. Small theatre groups blossomed briefly from time to time, but in the fall of 1980, two local people, Cathy Vockeroth and Henry Bowen, initiated what would become one of Sundre's most successful endeavours. As the group's founding President and Director respectively, the two soon recruited enough people to get things off the ground and on May 29, 1981 two short plays were presented in the Sundre School Gymnasium: "The Ugly Duckling" by A.A. Milne, and "The Storm" by Donald Payton. These presentations drew such large crowds that curtain time was delayed by fifteen minutes in order to accommodate all the people lined up for admittance. To see such enthusiastic support from the community for this premier event must have been very exciting for the actors and technicians waiting backstage. Among these was actor Brian Bailey, a man who would eventually play a huge role in the ongoing success of the theatre group and be instrumental in the promotion and construction of the Sundre Arts Centre. In the meantime, though, having launched a very successful first production, the theatre group began to plan its future.

On November 5th, 1981, Peak Theatre Players was incorporated as a society. In the twenty-eight years since then they have offered scores of productions to the public; won acting awards, and built a venue which is not just the home of the theatrical group but has hosted many local and internationally renowned performers in the arts.

Prior to the construction of the Sundre Arts Centre, Peak Theatre productions were held at the Sundre School, the Sundre Elks Hall and the West Country Centre. With the introduction of Dinner Theatre and then the very well received Dessert Theatre, which is still a very popular part of modern day productions, Sundre residents were able to partake in the type of cultural experience that had previously been available only in the much larger centres.

Many people have contributed over the years to the outstanding success of Peak Theatre. From the talented actors and actresses, producers and

directors, to the sound technicians, curtain and wardrobe crew and all the more lowly but essential positions in between, each has played a major part in advancing the society's productions to a level which continues to bring a great deal of pride to the community. Group members of long standing, whether actors or technicians, or both, include, or have included, Dr. Hal Irvine, Colleen Bailey, Bill Lough, Dianne Irvine, Michael Zimmerman, Shannon Simmington, Sandy Watt, Dusty Miller and, of course, Brian Bailey. Hundreds of other people, including many other "regulars", have been involved over the years, and new faces continue to add to the diverse talents of the group.



Sundre Arts Centre

Serving the Community for Twenty Seven Years

Home for Ambulance Comes Full Circle

By the early 1980's, the need to locate an ambulance service in Sundre to provide emergency medical transportation for residents of the town and surrounding area had become an urgent necessity. At that time, the nearest services were at Olds and Didsbury, approximately twenty-five and thirty-five miles distant respectively. On several occasions, when an ambulance was required for Sundre, the response time was well over an hour and this was considered unacceptable.

On January 17th, 1980, Mayor Myron Thompson set up an investigative committee comprised



Sundre's First Ambulance. *Photo courtesy of Sundre Hospital archives*

of members of Town Council, Sundre Hospital Board, the Ladies Auxiliary, Sundre Chamber of Commerce, the Fire Department and local physicians. Among these members were Bill Scott, Duane Grace, Gordon Bowhay, Alex Johnston, Marvin Henderson, Georgina Hilts, George Pusey and Harvey Doering. Myron was the chairman, Harvey Doering was the secretary, and Georgina Hilts was the treasurer. This committee gathered information on all aspects of ambulance service. At that time, an equipped van-type ambulance cost in the region of \$30,000.00 and there was no provincial funding available. The funds needed to purchase the ambulance would have to be raised through the community. Having done as much as they could, the investigative committee handed the work over to a newly formed Ambulance Board.

Georgina Hilts, who also served as treasurer, chaired the Ambulance Board and Beverly Luking was secretary. Other members were Bill Scott, Neil Vanderzwan, Gordon Bowhay, Marcella Burkholder, Marianne Hunt and Neil Dibble. Georgina was able to secure a number of donations and pledges from community members and from major corporations in the area. Enough money was raised to purchase the van and necessary supplies and Sundre's first official ambulance service was up and running by February 1982. By this time, Neil Vanderzwan was Mayor of Sundre and a motion was made by Council to collect \$3.50 per capita towards the operation of the Ambulance Service.

Initially, the ambulance was operated by volunteer drivers with First Aid Certificates and "class 4" licenses. These drivers included John Whitesell, John Parker and Neil Vanderzwan. Council recognized the need for an attendant with advanced medical qualifications and was willing to employ someone for this purpose. The first paid ambulance attendant was Wolfgang Kemna, who was assisted by the three volunteers.

At that time, the ambulance was stored at the Fire Hall. Nurses at the Sundre Hospital conducted dispatch services. The basic rate for emergency calls or transfers was set at \$90.00, with mileage added at \$1.38/km. Oxygen and Entonox were provided free of charge.

In 1991, the Ambulance was moved from the Fire Hall and housed in an Ambulance Station close to the hospital. This would be its home until 2005.

Sundre's early ambulance service set the standard for many others in small town Alberta. At the time of its formation it was hailed by many as the best in the area, bar none. The dedication of its team members and the support given to it by the people of the area helped make vital service a real asset to the growing community.

In 2005, the Sundre and District EMS amalgamated with Mountain View EMS. By this time, there were two Sundre ambulances and a team of trained professionals to run them. Also, in the same year, the Sundre Fire Department expanded its Fire Hall and its design allowed for the accommodation of the ambulances and the provision of liv-

ing quarters for the 'on-call' crews. Sundre Ambulance Services, known today as Mountain View Regional Emergency Services, was back where it started in 1982, with the addition of fully up-to-date equipment and a highly trained slate of medical technicians.

Expanding Population Results in Expanded Services

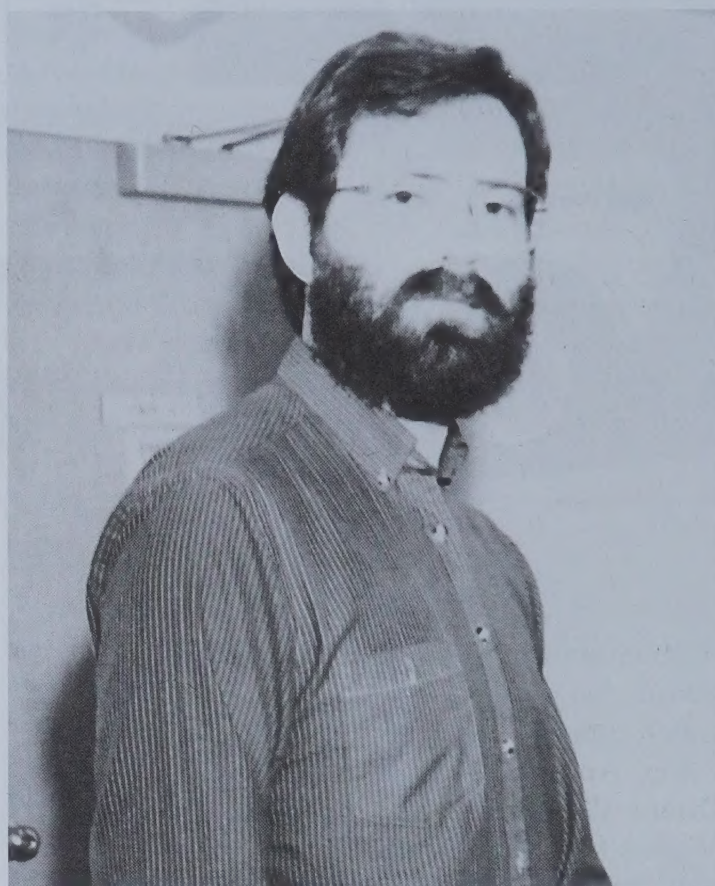
Dr. Hal Irvine Joins One of Sundre's Two Medical Clinics in 1982

Harland Stewart Irvine was born in Vancouver, BC., in 1952, the middle child of Harlie and Joyce Irvine. He married Dianne Fisher from Sylvan Lake, Alberta, in 1974, and in 1975 earned his Bachelor of Science Degree, graduating two years later as a Medical Doctor.

In 1981, Dr. Irvine answered an advertisement for a physician, placed on behalf of the community by Sundre Mayor Neil Vanderzwan in the "Canadian Family Physicians" publication. Dr. Irvine made his first visit to Sundre in December of that year and met with the Mayor and with Town Administrator, Harvey Doering at the Town Office; with Nursing Administrator Patricia Campkin, and Hospital Board Chairman, Gordon Bowhay, at the Sundre Hospital; and with Drs. Corley and White at their clinics. The young doctor was very impressed with the hospital, its modern equipment and the skilled medical staff. By January of the following year he moved his family, which by then included two children, to Sundre and shortly afterwards joined the practice that had been started by Dr. Corley in 1978 in the Sundre Plaza. He was appointed as Chief of Staff at the Sundre Hospital about a year later.

Dr. Jill Konkin joined the practice in 1986, but stayed only a short time and was replaced by Dr. Susan Orr in 1987. Shortly after this, Dr. Corley left the community and Dr. Irvine and Dr. Orr began to discuss their options for the future. A decision was made to open a new clinic in the former Nurses Residence at the Sundre Hospital. Renovations were made and Greenwood Family Physicians opened its doors in January 1988. Later that year, Dr. Jim Thompson joined the two associates, and a year later, in December 1989, Dr. Carol

Rowntree, who was born and raised in Carstairs, Alberta, joined the team. These four physicians formed the core medical team at the clinic.



Doctor Hal Irvine in 1986.

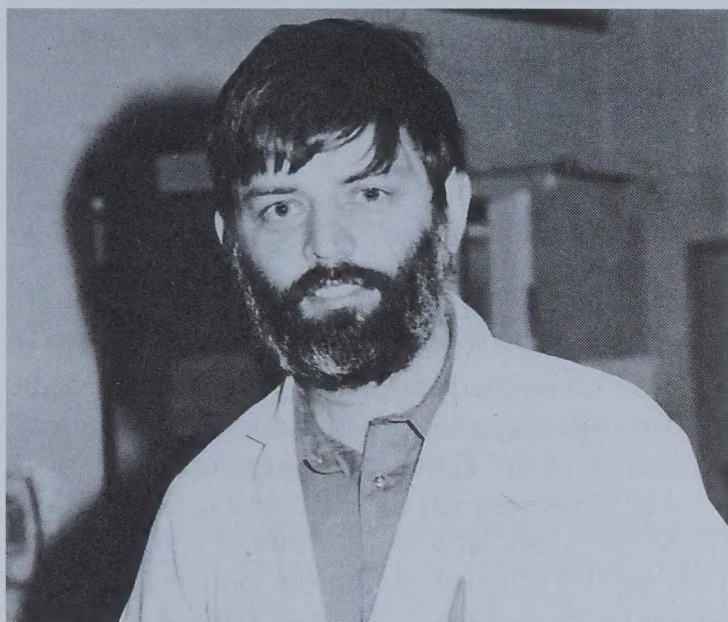
Photo courtesy of Sundre Hospital archives

After Dr. Orr moved to Calgary in the early 1990's, Dr. Glen Kowalsky was enticed to help out "for six months", and ended up practicing in Sundre for several years.

Dr. Kathryn Dundas replaced Dr. Thompson in 1997. In 1998, husband and wife team, Dr. Eugene Landsbergen and Dr. Carla Foolen came to Sundre and joined Greenwood Family Physicians, and a year after that, the addition of Dr. Michelle Warren brought the number of family practitioners at the clinic to seven.

Back in 1985, Dr. Corley, Dr. Irvine and Sundre Hospital began offering learning opportunities for medical students. Initially, this was an informal arrangement and it is interesting to note that Dr. Carol Rowntree was the first medical student to take advantage of this. Since 1992, this student training has been formalized. The medical students work alongside the physicians for what has traditionally been a four-week period of training in rural family medicine. In 1996, Canadian and interna-

tional doctors in postgraduate training began to come to Sundre for two-month periods as part of their training. This has proved to be a mutually



Doctor James Corley in 1984.

Photo courtesy of Sundre Hospital Archives

beneficial arrangement, however, even better things are in store: Greenwood Family Physicians is to take part in the Rural Integrated Community Clerkship Program. This is a relatively new program in Canada and Sundre is one of only a few communities across the country that has been chosen to participate. Similar programs in the United States where, historically, physicians tend to specialize rather than focus on family medicine, have shown that the number of graduates choosing to go into family practice has increased significantly. Because Canada has an ongoing shortage of family doctors, especially in the rural areas, Dr. Irvine and his associates are very excited about the introduction of this program. Rob Warren and Garland Jonker will join Greenwood Family Physicians in April 2008. While here, they will be expected to meet all the learning objectives of the core clinical areas of medicine, which include the areas of not only Family Medicine, but also Internal Medicine, Surgery, Paediatrics, Obstetrics and Gynaecology, and Psychiatry, fulfilling a commitment of a total of at least nine months here.

In January 2006 Greenwood Family Physicians expanded its patient services to include a walk-in clinic, located on Main Avenue West. The building housed the practice of Dr. Alan White for many years, until his death in 1998. In 1999, Dr. Leonore Stampa purchased the practice, ensuring continu-

ity for Dr. White's patients for several years. When she left the practice to pursue other opportunities, the clinic became vacant and Greenwood Family Physicians decided to utilize it for walk-in services. At the present time, this clinic operates on a part time-basis, but with the addition of the two new doctors to the Greenwood group in 2008, it is possible the hours will be expanded.



Greenwood Family Physicians in 2007.

Photo courtesy of Dr. Hal Irvine



Greenwood Clinic in 2007

Hal and Dianne Irvine have now lived in Sundre for more than twenty-five years. They are well known in the area and have made many friends here. Their contributions to the community have extended well beyond those involving Dr. Irvine's medical practice and Dianne's skills as a music teacher, and include a long-standing involvement in Peak Theatre Players. Dr. Irvine's associates have also come to think of Sundre as

“home” and they too have become respected and recognised members of the community.

Modern Lumber Mill Employs Hundreds

The History of Sundre Forest Products

There has been a lumber industry in the Sundre area for as long as there have been permanent residents. In the early years of Sundre’s history, many settlers supplemented their incomes by selling or trading the lumber they produced from small sawmills located on their homesteads.

As the years passed and business development expanded, several individuals opened small companies directly related to the production and sale of lumber. Among these early endeavours were Sundre Lumber Company, Sundre Contracting and Burke’s Lumber. Sundre Lumber Company, formed in 1947, employed a number of people and was a successful operation for several years. In the 1950s, however, the three men running the company dissolved their partnership and sold the company to Revelstoke Lumber. Revelstoke was also a successful business and it operated on the west side of the Bergen Road for roughly three decades, providing reliable local employment for an average of forty men and women.

In 1986, the Revelstoke Lumber Company sold

their mill to Ross Creelman and Bruce Buchanan from the Maritimes. The old Revelstoke yard was still used for a while by a company known as TKM. It operated as a producer of specialized lumber products, under the management of Tom and Linus Clark

In 1987, Sunpine Forest Products was incorporated and the new owners embarked on an ambitious venture that would see the building of a new, high tech mill west of Sundre. Completed in 1989, this mill would provide employment for many people, including both permanent and contract workers. It was destined to become one of the most diversified and successful mills in Canada.

By 1992, Sunpine was able to return its loan guarantee to the Provincial Government.

Mr. Creelman left the partnership in 1993, and his shares were sold to Louisiana Pacific Canada Ltd. In 1996, Bruce Buchanan bought back the shares. Also in 1996, upgrades were made to the plant at a cost of twenty-five million dollars.



Bruce Buchanan in 1997.

Photo courtesy of Sundre Forest Products archives



The Old Revelstoke Mill Shortly After it was Purchased by Buchanan and Creelman in 1986.

Photo courtesy of Sundre Forest Products archives

With the addition of a state-of-the-art laminated veneer plant near Rocky Mountain House in 1997, the company’s success story continued and employment opportunities increased.

In 1998, Sunpine was sold to Weldwood of Canada Ltd. and remained in their control for six years. A serious fire at the plant in May 2001 destroyed thousands of cubic metres of logs that were stacked in the yard. Firefighters from Sundre, Olds and Didsbury helped fight the blaze, assisted by many company employees. Helicopters and planes were used to drop water on the flaming log piles. It was several days before the fire was considered safely under control. The cause of the blaze was never established.



The Sunpine Fire in 2001.

Photo courtesy of Sundre Forest Products archives

In 2004, the company was sold again, this time to West Fraser Timber Co. Ltd., a Canadian based company operating out of British Columbia and Alberta. At this time, the name of the local mill was changed from Sunpine to Sundre Forest Products.

The success of Sunpine/Sundre Forest Products has had a lot to do with its ability to manufacture a wide variety of products from the range of logs it harvests – from decking and log home products to fence posts, treated lumber and laminated veneer. The company runs a computerized scanning program that calculates how the logs should be cut to optimize the use of the wood. When this scanning process was introduced in Sundre in 1995, the plant became the only completely optimized sawmill in the world. The diversity of products has meant that despite the difficulties experienced by many lumber companies in Canada over recent years, production at the Sundre mill has continued to increase and it remains a stable source of employment for the community.

Recycling and reforestation are important aspects of the lumber industry and Sundre Forest Products takes both very seriously: Sunpine founder, Bruce Buchanan, who had always enjoyed wildlife photography and the outdoors, had a very real interest in conservation and it was apparent in the way he ran the company. He was very keen on reprocessing waste into something useful and the present management continues this practice: Bark is stockpiled in the sawmill yard and sold as horticultural mulch; sawdust is sent to Calgary where it is pressed into fuel pellets; planer shavings are used as livestock bedding and wood chips

are sent to Hinton where they are used as raw material in the pulp mill there.

Reforestation is an ongoing process that is required by law. In clear-cut areas, harvested trees are replaced with seedlings that are grown from seeds that come from within a fifty-mile radius of the new tree nursery. Trials are ongoing to harvest and develop genetically superior seeds. Although a clear-cut area will reseed itself naturally, human intervention results in faster growth and healthier trees. Scarifying the area initially, and trimming back some of the natural forestation that occurs, helps the young seedlings meet their requirements for light and water. Every few years, surveys are done to ensure the trees are doing well and to replant those that aren't. Government inspectors audit the progress. Eventually, mature trees will once again cast their shadows across the forest floor.



Sundre Forest Products Main Office.

Photo courtesy of Sundre Forest Products archives

In 2007, Sundre Forest Products celebrated the company's twentieth anniversary. At this time, the company directly employed two hundred and sixty-five people and indirectly employed a further two hundred under contract. The operation processes approximately two hundred and sixty-five million board feet of lumber annually, produces three point five million fence posts, and treats approximately sixty-five million board feet of lumber on an annual basis.

The legacy of the dream that consumed two young men from New Brunswick, more than two decades ago, continues to unfold, and with it, an important aspect of Sundre's past – and its future.

Out with the Old – In with the New

Sundre's Second Curling Rink

Walter Wrigley was a member of the Sundre Curling Club Executive Committee in 1984/85 when the findings of a safety study revealed some serious structural concerns about the Sundre Curling Rink. The beams of the old rink, built in 1951, were starting to show signs of rot and without a great deal of money being spent on upgrading, the life of the building appeared to be coming to its end. Roger Kyncl, an area businessman and an avid curler, suggested that maybe the time had come to build a new rink. There was money in the Curling Club's coffers as fundraising for eventual replacement of the rink had begun in 1983, and grants were available to boost the fund. With additional fundraising, it looked as though a new rink was possible.

Walt and Roger organized and headed a building committee consisting of six members, including Carol Hudec, who served as treasurer, Les and Donna Waldroff, Mary-Lou Maskell, and Garianne Williams (Mogck). The committee's first job was to contact engineers regarding design and costs.

Over the next two years, the group looked at several types of new arenas in different communities, eventually deciding on a metal structure. They also looked into the various grants that were available, talked with contractors and began fundraising. The cost of construction of the shell of the new rink, not including ice making equipment and related under floor pipes, was expected to be around eighty thousand dollars. The committee had originally planned that the building should run north and south, but after consultation with the Town, it was decided it should run east and west, connecting to the existing arena. This really made a lot of sense to the club, but the changes did incur some extra cost. In the end, because of the combined length of the two buildings and insurance concerns relating to this, the

two were not joined. Late in 1987, construction began.

Fundraising efforts started in earnest: raffles were ongoing, cabarets were held, and, for two years, volunteers sold hamburgers to spectators attending the Sundre Rodeo. The committee also sold debentures to businesses and the general public. In May 1988, many donations and grants began to come in, including a generous outright donation from the Sundre Elks Club for ten thousand dollars; a seventy-five thousand dollar grant from the Sundre Agricultural Society and a one hundred thousand dollar grant from the County Recreation Board. The Sundre Elks donated an additional three thousand dollars in September that same year. Grants through the Sundre and District Recreation Board were added to the fund.

The community was enthusiastic and supportive of the new rink, and Walt Wrigley, who, with his wife Diana, ran Smart's Trophies, decided to take a year off from the day-to-day aspects of the business to work on the rink, leaving Diana in charge. Roger Kyncl, who, with his wife Bev, ran Kyncl Trucking, was able to do the same. The two men, along with numerous other volunteers, worked very hard on the completion of the inside of the building. Big Horn Electric and local tradesman, Doug Edwards, donated all the labour for the electrical work, with the curling club purchasing the necessary materials. Local contractor, Tim Williams, along with Roger and Walt, oversaw all the building work and decided what needed to be done, and when. Several teams, each consisting of four to five volunteers, worked whenever they could on the inside drywall and siding; groups of ladies did the painting and cleaning. Of all the interior work, only the plumbing and heating work had to be contracted out. A great many people contributed a great many hours to the construction of the new rink.

Early in 1988, Walt had an accident while at the rink, which resulted in a separated shoulder, requiring pins and six weeks of no lifting. He spent part of the duration of the Calgary Winter Olympics in hospital in that city. Once he returned home, he still helped oversee construction at the rink.

Once the building was completed, the Curling Club had to borrow a hundred thousand dollars in order to pay off the remaining construction debt. With the backing of the Town of Sundre, who owned the land on which the building stood,

the group was able to secure a ten-year loan from the Alberta Treasury Branch. The loan carried a floating interest rate. Unfortunately, this was the period when interest rates went through the roof in Canada, and while the loan had started out at a fairly reasonable rate of approximately eight percent, it very quickly zoomed up to a shocking seventeen percent – leaving the curling club with a monthly payment it did not have enough income to cover. In desperation, the club approached the Town of Sundre and asked for help with this devastating financial burden. Council reviewed the situation and agreed to an annual grant of approximately seventy-five hundred dollars to the curling club to help offset the interest payments. This was a huge relief to the club.



The Sundre Curling Rink in 2008

In March 1988, the old curling rink was closed and eventually it was sold to the County of Mountain View for fifty thousand dollars. The County used it for storage and for some school activities. On November 28th, 1988, a month after the start of the official curling season, the new rink opened its doors. Three months later, on February 25th, 1989, a bonspiel was held to commemorate the Official Opening. That same month, the club was in receipt of a seventy-five thousand dollar grant through the Alberta Lottery/ Alberta Government Community Facility Enhancement Program. The Curling Club ran its own bar and the ladies in the organization ran the concession booth, all on a volunteer basis. Today these services are contracted out.

Within ten years of opening the rink, the Curling Club had completely paid off all its debts. This included paying back all the original debentures purchased by community members. Several renovations and upgrades have been completed in the

twenty years of the new rink's history.

Today, many important events are hosted at the rink through the Ag Society, including banquets, shows, the annual SPOG Neighbour's Day and the weekly Farmer's Market, held between May and September each year. The Curling Club continues to have a healthy membership, with young and old enjoying the camaraderie, the fun and the challenge of this ancient sport.

Highly Trained Professionals Provide Essential Service

Sundre Search and Rescue

Sundre Search and Rescue's roots go back over seventeen years to a time when search and rescue in Alberta was in its infancy. At that time there were only two other groups, the first formed in Rocky Mountain House and one in Athabasca in Central Alberta.

Sundre resident Dennis Bowhay, a passionate outdoorsman who spent much of his leisure time in our vast west country, was well aware of the risks and hazards associated with backcountry activities and was concerned about adequate RCMP response to emergencies in remote locations due to funding, manpower availability and expertise. With this apparent need for specially trained responders in the Sundre area to assist the local RCMP, Sundre Search & Rescue was born in November 1992. With Dennis leading the group as president, working closely with Constable Tom Clark as the RCMP liaison and search manager, the group began soliciting members. By May of 1993, training began with 35 members taking part in the fundamentals training course. The group was officially incorporated in September 1993, as the Sundre Volunteer Search and Rescue Society.

In June 1993 Sandy Smith presented a new preventative program called "Lost in the Woods" to the four kindergarten classes at the Sundre Elementary School. The program stressed five key points to remember if you become lost: stay in one place, stay warm, make a bed, stay calm and be seen. The children also received a small survival kit. Since that first presentation the Lost in the Woods, Sandy Smith, Sharon Cooper and



Sundre Search & Rescue Volunteers During Man Tracking Exercises.

Photo courtesy of Sundre Search & Rescue archives

Helen Jackson have delivered the program, at various times, to every child going through the Sundre school system. Perhaps this is why Sundre Search & Rescue has had very few instances where they have had to search for a local resident.

In July of 1993, fresh from their training and eager to help, members assisted in the search for a missing 13-year-old Edmonton girl who was lost for over three days in the Ram Falls area. This was one of the largest and highest profile searches in Alberta history. It ended happily with the girl being found unhurt.

Over the next several years the team remained active, with ongoing training of new and existing members as well as helping the RCMP in many searches. Most searches were for overdue persons who were usually located in a short period of time. Other calls were for assistance in gathering or locating evidence, such as with the thousands of

clues generated when ten pieces of logging equipment were blown up in the Water Valley area. Another successful evidence search was the location of a revolver, used as a murder weapon in the Calgary area. The use of volunteer searchers in these instances is a huge benefit to the RCMP as it would be very difficult and expensive to use RCMP members for the same number of man-hours that volunteer searchers can provide in a short period of time.

In 1999, a new facet of search and rescue was created when Glenda Schneidmiller formed our mounted search and rescue team. Although horses had been used on a limited basis for SAR work in other areas of Alberta, Sundre became the only team with an organized mounted unit.

In February of 2002, Sundre Search and Rescue was presented with the "Ambassador

of the Year Award" by the Sundre and District Chamber of Commerce. This award is given to a person or group who actively promotes Sundre provincially, nationally or internationally. It was a great honor for the Sundre group to be selected for this award.

For the first eight years the focus of the team was to assist in wilderness searches for missing or overdue people. That all changed in July 2000 when a category F4 Tornado touched down in a populated campground at Pine Lake, Alberta. Provincial emergency authorities immediately saw the value in large groups of trained and organized volunteers who could help out in these types of civil emergencies. Since then provincial funding has been provided to help with training costs, as well as memorandums of understandings created with SAR groups specific to civil emergency. Other missions of civil emergency were a call to assist in a partial evacuation of the city of Red Deer due to a chemical spill and, most recently, the evacuation of 1,300 residents from the Town of Sundre during the June 2005 flood. The flood event also took teams to the City of Drumheller and into the County of Clearwater to assist with their disaster efforts.

The mandate of SAR is to provide trained, organized and well prepared volunteers to assist the local RCMP or Government Agencies in a time of need. Volunteers come from many different walks of life, with differing levels of training and experience. The organization currently has close to sixty members, with two RCMP trained search managers; members trained in man tracking; high and low angle rescue; advanced first aid; swift water rescue and equine (mounted) SAR. Whatever the level of training or experience of the members, the one thing that is constant is that they are all prepared and dedicated to help in whatever way that they can.

An innovative addition to the group's resources in recent years is Electronic Mapping. This process utilizes GPS and computer technologies and allows searchers to record and study areas covered during the search. The system was used in November 2007 during the search for a missing hunter, west of Sundre. It helped lead Search and Rescue personnel to a site where they discovered the remains of the Calgary man who experts believe was killed by a grizzly bear. Sadly, not all searches for missing persons have positive outcomes.

The President of Sundre SAR in 2007 is Jay

Mills. Others who have served in this capacity since Dennis Bowhay are Jim Bartholow, Les Hengen, Roger Tetreault, Burt Gillings, Roger Tetreault (2nd term), and David Smee.

Solutions in a Time of Upheaval

The Birth of Sundre Petroleum Operators Group (SPOG) – with information from Spog's World Café Workbook, compiled by Krista Waters

The stage was set for SPOG's creation in the early 1990's as the oil and gas industry looked to increase business in the busy farming and ranching region around Sundre and Caroline. The relationship between residents, landowners and the oil and gas industry was already strained, communication had broken down and everyone involved was experiencing stress. This unpleasant situation was the catalyst for change.

In 1992, two separate events raised the anxiety level in the Sundre and Caroline areas. Shell was creating its Emergency Response Plan for the new Caroline Complex and a Nova natural gas pipeline ruptured. Residents asked for a single telephone number to use for complaints or emergencies. This number would activate a call-down process to ensure all relevant companies were notified and residents didn't have to do the detective work. The toll-free number was set up through the Shell Caroline Control Room.

While creating the call-down process, it became clear that cooperation among energy companies would be beneficial in many different areas. The Sundre Petroleum Operators Group was born with 13 local companies as members.

The first step to organizing SPOG was defining the geographic area it would cover. Operators in the area compared Emergency Response Planning maps and defined the area of greatest overlap as the SPOG area. SPOG covers a 900-square-mile geographical area bounded by Hwy 54 to the north, Hwy 766 to the east, Hwy 582 to the south, and Range 7/8 to the west.

1995 — While SPOG's formation and the emergency phone number addressed some of the residents' concerns, communication didn't improve and the situation reached a boiling point in 1995 when Shell Canada applied to the Alberta Energy and Utilities Board (AEUB) to increase the

throughput of the Shell Caroline Gas Plant. Approximately 60 people brought forward concerns at a pre-hearing meeting in June of 1996. The EUB elected to address concerns specific to the throughput increase at a hearing and, in a unique move, the EUB also mandated other concerns related to general operations of the industry in the area would be addressed separately through an "Interrogatory Process."

During the Interrogatory Process, the EUB hired a communication consultant who interviewed 60 families. The consultant's report showed a serious breakdown in communication between the public and industry. SPOG held a communication workshop to address this breakdown. As a result of the workshop, the community and SPOG defined their vision as "a long-term relationship based on mutual trust, honesty and respect, by way of sharing pertinent information to resolve issues for all stakeholders."

1997 — Twelve public and/or municipal representatives from different geographic regions joined the SPOG Community Affairs Working Group in 1997 as Associate Members. The Sundre Petroleum Operators Group's membership grew to include representatives from 30 oil and gas companies with operations in the Sundre/Caroline area, 15 communities and the Alberta Energy and Utilities Board or EUB (the regulating body for development of Alberta's energy resources.) Members established roles and responsibilities for SPOG and created processes to deal with information sharing, new development, and complaints.

Community representatives continue to bring forward the concerns of their neighbours and provide input and feedback on communication strategies. They also often chair subcommittees formed to address specific issues. Additional public members are encouraged to sit on subcommittees and new development committees.

SPOG has a chairman, board of directors, by-laws, annual budget, and fees (based on the amount of the member's production inside the SPOG boundaries.) In addition to paying fees, members of this umbrella group must have a representative sit on one of the working groups. SPOG also has an office and staff to organize and coordinate the activities, events, and initiatives of the various committees, which include:

SPOG Pilot Project
Resident Visits

Caroline Livestock Study
Communication
Noise

SPOG members have accomplished many things in the last 10 years:

- Oversaw \$1.5 million investment over 16 years into the Caroline Livestock Study resulting in 20,000 cow records and the gathering of much valuable information for the ongoing viability of these two important Alberta industries — agriculture and oil and gas.
- 10 years of Neighbor's Day, including a visit from Premier Ralph Klein.
- Caroline Noise Study (first opportunity for synergizing between companies)
- New Development Committees—chaired by community members, these committees have formed to guide project development ranging from Shell's electricity generation project to the oilfield waste site (CCS), a project that was cancelled following community input.
- Fund-raising for replacement of community halls destroyed by flood and fire as well as other community projects such as museums and ambulance.
- Community aid for flood victims in 2005 through manpower and supplies.
- Integrated Emergency Response pilot project with Emergency Management Alberta and Telus Geomatics.
- Community Capacity Building initiatives including facilitator training and Stephen Covey's The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People workshops for community and industry members.
- Resident Visit Program eliminates multiple visits to people who live in more than one company's Emergency Planning Zone. Instead, data for all the company's Emergency Response Plans is collected during a single visit and shared. SPOG currently has about 6000 records.
- Outreach: participation in Synergy Alberta as well as sharing information about SPOG with people across the province and in China and Australia.
- Mutual Aide: The 1-800 phone number has logged more than 1000 phone calls during its years of operation.

In 2007, Sundre Petroleum Operators Group celebrated its Fifteen Year Anniversary and held its World Café review to address issues that are relevant at the present time.

SPOG Neighbor's Day is a community event, which has been held every fall for the past ten years. Neighbor's Day has become an enjoyable and informative social occasion for area residents.

The Blossoming of Sundre Garden Club

Seeds Planted in 1997

The Sundre area has always offered a hefty challenge for those passionate and creative individuals who pursue an interest in back-yard horticulture. First, there is our unique climate to consider: Compared to some areas of the world, even some areas of Canada, our year round weather pattern is considered "moderate". Despite this, we are quite limited to the variety of plants we can grow, although this is changing quite dramatically as more hardy species are developed each year for our area. But it isn't so much the brief periods of extreme cold or the occasional long periods of drought that are the main adversary of Sundre area gardeners. The Chinook, appearing so benignly in mid-winter and welcomed by many, is often the "thief in the night" that steals our prized perennials and shrubs. Many plants can tolerate having their roots frozen, unfortunately, for us; they prefer to keep them frozen until spring. The infamous warm winds of the Chinook, like rambunctious children, tend to put Mother (Nature) in a tailspin, undoing all her careful planning and work and presenting us with some new bare spots in the border come late April. Then there are the deer - and the moose - and the moles - not to mention the grasshoppers and the aphids and, (dare I even say the word?) - quack grass!

As is often the case, great ideas frequently develop from a simple passing thought or question in the mind of an individual. In September, 1997, area resident and garden enthusiast, Gayle Warkentin, was thinking about the many gardeners she knew in the vicinity and wondering if there could be an avenue through which these people could come together to exchange knowledge in a

spirit of camaraderie and shared interest. The thought persisted and Gayle began to share her ideas with other gardeners.

Over the winter of 1997, ideas were collected, research was done, and information was gathered regarding the formation of a garden club.

On February 17, 1998, approximately fifteen people attended the club's inaugural meeting: The structure and purpose of the club was discussed and decided upon, as were the costs and perks of membership and the frequency of holding Regular and General Meetings. It was decided that the club would publish a quarterly newsletter offering informative gardening information and useful tips - how to use mulch and snow to protect plants from damaging Chinooks; what to plant to discourage deer and moose from browsing on tender young shoots; how to avoid quack grass.

Barb and Allan Wiens, who would become the club's first Secretary and Treasurer respectively, offered their combined computer expertise towards the layout and publication of the newsletter. The Sundre Garden Club was up and running. Its mandate was, and is, to provide a medium through which fellow gardeners can meet and expand their knowledge and interest in their hobby; where they can develop new friendships; beautify their property and their community; become more aware of the environment and generally have fun as they aim towards improving their horticultural skills in a hands-on manner.

In the five years that followed that first meeting, the membership of the Sundre Garden Club increased to seventy-seven members. They enjoyed tours and workshops throughout the seasons and participated in two plant exchanges a year. They began entering a float in the annual Sundre Parade and have been amongst the finalists on several occasions. On February 10, 2003, the club celebrated its fifth birthday with a commemorative cake and, among those celebrating the event, five of its eleven charter members were in attendance. In September of that same year, the Garden Club decorated the entrance for SPOG's (Sundre Petroleum Operators Group) "Neighbours Day", held annually at the arena and other local venues.

More than ten years after Gayle Warkentin began to nurture the little seeds that would grow into the successful Garden Club of today, interest is still high and membership remains extremely healthy. Over the years, the club has expanded its

horizons in order to meet the needs of its membership and the community in general.

Sundre Garden Club members now actively participate in hosting in the Communities in Bloom project on a local level. A family barbecue is held in conjunction with this event in July of each year. The club has also created a Floral Basket category at the Sundre School Fair, which gives local students the opportunity to create beautiful displays for patios and decks, while learning a little about nature and horticulture in general. Garden Club members also create baskets for the adult section of this class.

The club sometimes assists the Sundre Museum in keeping the various flowerbeds throughout the grounds in good order and if you have ever admired the gorgeous hanging baskets full of assorted annuals that the Town of Sundre displays each growing season, you might be interested to know that these are planted annually by the Sundre Garden Club at Savoury Gardens.

An annual mystery tour now adds a little extra fun for Garden Club members and educational workshops, and presentations still take place on a regular basis. Representatives from the Town of Sundre and the Sundre and District Agricultural Society sit on the Garden Club committee. The quarterly newsletter is still very popular and now includes advertising for local garden related businesses.

The future looks good for Sundre Garden Club as the residents of the community and its surrounding area continue to take on the richly rewarding challenges involved in creating a personal oasis right outside their own doors.

On February 12, 2008 Sundre Garden Club members celebrated the club's ten year anniversary at a special function held at the Sundre Elks Hall.

Community "Pools" Its Resources to Realize a Dream Sundre & District Aquaplex

1967 was the 100th anniversary of confederation in Canada. It was a great year for the country, and communities from coast to coast celebrated the event with great enthusiasm: The Canadian

economy was at its post-war peak, and levels of prosperity and quality of life were at an all-time high; Nationalistic pride had become more evident as a generation of Canadians enjoyed their senior years, having lived their entire lives free of British rule. The mood of the population was one of optimism; Baby Boomers had come of age and were to become a major force in the evolution of Canadian culture. Some people still believe that 1967 was one of the most positive years in Canadian history.

Communities and organizations across Canada were encouraged to engage in "Centennial Projects" to celebrate the anniversary. The projects ranged from special one-time events to local improvement projects, such as the construction of municipal arenas and parks. In Sundre, the decision was made to build an outdoor Centennial Swimming Pool.

In the years prior to 1967, Red Cross swimming lessons were often held in the Little Red Deer River at Westward Ho, and also in an area of the Bearberry Creek just south of the first curling rink and west of the present bridge. In 1951 the Village of Sundre maintained this pool area and the school shop class built two changing huts and two toilets nearby. In 1962, Jack Lewis, owner of Jack's Diving Shop in Sundre, gave diving lessons. These were held in the Little Red.

For the Sundre and area community, the swimming pool was to become an important focus for summertime activity, especially for families and teens. It was located on the south side of Main Avenue West, in the area occupied today by Smart's Trophies & Advertising, Webb Financial, and the Parkwood Motor Inn. It was open from the May long weekend until Labour day each summer, and on weekends and during school holidays it was often the most popular place in town. The pool backed onto a park-like area, where a wading pool was provided for small children, with picnic tables close by.

Unfortunately, the pool facility, which was owned and operated by the Town of Sundre, would show a deficit of \$3,600.00 in its first year of operation. This proved to be an omen for the future of the pool, for in the years that followed it was besieged with structural problems and with high costs related to repairs and maintenance.

Despite the setbacks, the Centennial Pool continued to operate, but by 1985 it was slated for closure after the Town indicated it was just too

costly to keep it operating. A "Save the Pool" committee was initiated and shortly afterwards the pool was given a reprieve. In 1986 the Sundre Otters Swim Club was formed, with 24 members between the ages of six and fourteen. That same year, nineteen years after the pool was built, the debt for its construction was paid off. Sadly, despite the efforts of many residents to keep it open, the pool's days were numbered. Two years later a decision was made by Council to close the facility, due to emerging health concerns, and in March 1989 the closure became official. It was a sad day for the community and especially for the many children of the area.

By April 1989, the pool site was put up for sale, but Sundre and area residents were not simply accepting the loss of the popular facility: Already, a number of dedicated individuals had come together to discuss building a new pool, and one on a much grander scale and with year round usage. A pool fund was initiated. Donations began to come in from the community and surrounding area and people from all age groups and all walks of life became involved. In June 1989, junior and senior high students from the Sundre schools donated \$1,000.00, giving a nice boost to the fund. Three months later, Alta-West Realty donated their commission from the sale of the old pool property, bringing the total monies collected to date to \$160,000.00. By April 1990, the fund stood at \$171,735.00.

A year later, in March 1991, the pool committee was formed and consisted of seven members: Leona Bennett, Diana Halladay, Lonnie Halladay, Al Psuji, Don Molesky, Roger Kyncl and Donna Sandberg. Reg and Sharon Olsen became involved a short time later and Reg served as president through many of the fund-raising years. Operating under the Sundre Urban and Rural Recreation Board, the committee initiated a feasibility study to establish the construction and operational costs of a new pool. At this time the pool fund stood at \$209,850.00.

The Town of Sundre officially came on board in March 1992 when it reaffirmed its commitment to the proposed pool. In November of that year, the Pool Committee introduced the innovative Cow/Calf program, a fund raising project headed by Svend Nielsen that would prove to be one of the fund raising committee's most successful endeavours. The Pool Committee purchased approximately fifty bred heifers with a start up

amount of approximately \$25,000.00 and invited farmers to house and feed the animals and the calves they produced and then sell the calves, with profits going to the pool fund. All vet fees were paid from the fund. In its first year of operation the project raised \$19,800.00 and it has been a successful and ongoing source of funding for the pool ever since. By May 1993, the pool fund had reached a total of \$325,000.00. As time progressed, other fund raising projects would be introduced and these included a Celebrity Golf Tournament, which attracted notable sports people from top hockey and football teams, and also Olympic athletes. This fundraiser is ongoing in 2008. A Stud Auction was introduced, and was very successful, but was discontinued some years ago.

Diana Halladay and Leona Bennett were both on the Recreation Board and, beginning in December 1993, played an important role in the struggle to convince Town Council that allocating the monies from the sale of the old pool site, which stood at nearly \$300,000.00 and which the Town had earmarked for the purpose of paying off the Sundre Arena debt, to the new pool was the fair thing to do. The next few months proved to be a time of great frustration for the committee as the Town, while supportive of a new pool, continued in its reluctance to hand over the Reserve Fund.

By 1994, results of the feasibility study showed the cost of building the indoor pool to be in the region of 1.2 million dollars. Disagreement over the future of the Town's Pool Reserve Fund was ongoing and plans were set in place to hold a plebiscite to address this matter. In the meantime, the Town did hand over \$36,523.00 from the fund, plus interest, with an agreement that if a plebiscite were passed and when fifty percent of construction was complete, the Town would hand over the balance of the Reserve Fund.

In August 1994, School Trustee, Joe Henze entered the pool debate, throwing his support behind the pool and holding Town Council responsible for hampering the efforts of the Pool Committee. He voiced his opposition to the plebiscite and called it an attempt of Council to avoid taking responsibility for its actions. In the meantime, donations continued to come in from individuals, community groups and businesses. Unfortunately, with the ongoing delays to the project, estimated construction costs were increasing.

The wording of the most relevant section of the Pool Plebiscite, which in very real terms could

decide the fate of the proposed pool, was as follows:

"Part One: The Swimming Pool Fund-raising Committee of the Sundre and District Agriculture Society proposes building an indoor Swimming Pool attached to the Curling Rink in the Town of Sundre. The capital cost of the project is projected to be 1.3 million dollars and the annual operating costs are projected to be \$209,500.00, with an annual deficit in operations of approximately \$108,250.00, on a year round operation which is the responsibility of the Swimming Pool Fund-raising Committee and the Sundre and District Agriculture Society.

Part Two: It is proposed that the Town of Sundre provide the \$249,725.16 already in a reserve capital account and the land required for the facility and appropriate parking. The Town of Sundre is not being asked for any operation money; therefore there is no impact on the taxes paid by Town of Sundre residents."

The Plebiscite was held on September 26, 1994, with a major victory for the Pool Committee. Sundre residents voted 339 for and 82 against for handing over the funds. Still, delays persisted and it was April 1995 before the money was transferred to the committee, following the signing of a four party agreement between the Town of Sundre, The Agricultural Society, the Sundre and District Curling Club and the Sundre Pool Fund-raising Committee (SPFRC).

By November 1995, the pool fund stood at \$760,000.00, with the SPFRC hoping to accumulate a million dollars before the start of construction.

In April 1996 the pool project was recognised by the Alberta Association of Agricultural Societies when it was presented with the "Project of the Year Award.

In May 1996 the pool draft plan was accepted. It was to include a multi lane pool, a sauna, whirlpool and leisure pool and a water slide at a future date. The pool would be twenty-five metres long, four feet deep at the shallow end and eleven feet deep at the diving end.

By August 1996, pool plans were in serious jeopardy, cost estimates had risen to 1.6 million dollars and CFP grants amounting to \$500,000.00 were contingent with construction start up taking place by January 1997. Volunteer involvement was waning and the pool group was literally begging

for help with fund-raising activities. The committee requested that the Town, the Chamber of Commerce and all community service groups evaluate their positions on the pool project.

Support for the pool in the form of volunteer help and fund-raising results began to pick up and in October 1996, the company of Campbell Woodall was selected to build the pool. At this time the Pool Committee made application for society registration.

As 1996 drew to a close the Sundre and District Aquatic Society placed a full page ad in the newspaper recognizing all those who had contributed towards the pool fund, now standing at \$859,726.000. The Cow/Calf project had contributed over \$81,000.00 to this fund, the Celebrity Golf Tourney \$30,000.00, the Hockey Draft Project raised \$7,500.00 and community organizations had donated \$107,000.00.

On January 27, 1997, the Sundre and District Aquatic Society was officially registered and by April, the society announced that the pool would be open by December of that year, with all outside work completed by October 15. But the troubles that had plagued the pool committee from its inception were to continue. Ground breaking ceremonies for the pool took place on October 2, 1997, but Town Council was expressing concerns about the feasibility of the Society's assurance that the pool would operate in the black. Also, the signing of a new three party agreement between the Town of Sundre, the Aquatic Society and the Agricultural Society was delayed, due to a decision of Town Council to have the agreement reviewed by legal counsel. It would be February 1998 before the new agreement was finally signed, with the Sundre and District Agricultural Society retaining title of the land the pool would occupy. At this point, many large donations began to come in from local corporations: Petro-Canada gave the pool \$10,000.00, bringing its donation amount to that date to \$30,000.00; Shell Canada donated \$25,000.00; The Sunpine Lumber Mill had supported the pool through the seven years of its fund-raising history and in April 1998 donated \$65,000.00; Mobil Oil donated \$5,000.00 with a commitment of a further \$5,000.00 in 1999. Special mention should be given to Sundre school students for the many donations made over the years through the Student's Union. Many individuals and groups continued to donate and the pool fund balance reflected the community's generosity. Still,

the fund was not growing fast enough to keep up with the escalating projections for the cost of building the pool. The Aquatic Society was once again faced with a crisis situation and was going to have to consider a loan, something it had desperately hoped to avoid, as it would probably have resulted in taxpayers dollars having to go into the pool, a situation that the Town had been adamantly opposed to from the start. It was decided that a petition should be held to allow community members to express their opinion on this. The Town's response was that they would welcome the petition, but some councillors felt that if the Town were to take out debentures for the purpose of completing the pool, then the Town should run the facility. The results of the petition were devastating for the Aquatic Society. Only one hundred and twenty-five persons signed in favour of taking out debentures and two hundred and fifty names had been required.

Shortly after the failed petition, the Sundre Round Up ran an article that referred to the Sundre Pool, by now partially completed, as a possible "white elephant". All construction on the pool had been halted due to lack of funding to complete it; \$1,168,789.00 had been sunk into the project and for the time being the building was boarded up and all construction abandoned.

The troubles continued throughout the balance of 1998, with declining volunteer support, ongoing financial woes and, after nearly nine years of ups and downs, a feeling of generalized public apathy. By April 1999 the price tag for the pool had risen to 1.8 million dollars. The society requested Council's support for a \$600,000.00 Millennium Grant application. Seven months later, more bad news was received when the society learned it had been not been approved for the grant. However, there was some very good news too. The society announced that it had received a grant from an anonymous donor through the Calgary Foundation. This amounted to \$200,000.00, plus a commitment of \$40,000.00 per year over the next ten years. The pool project was suddenly and very happily back on track. However, by January 2000, cost estimates had risen to 2.1 million dollars.

There was a further boost to the pool fund in March 2000 when the Stallion Auction brought in \$24,000.00. In July 2000 the Society announced it might need to fund-raise approximately \$50,000.00 per year for operational costs. By Au-

gust, finishing touches were completed on the pool's roof; windows were installed in November 2000. The pool was nearing completion – the end of a long, hard road was in sight for all those who had devoted so many hours and so much blood, sweat and tears to the project. According to long time member, Leona Bennett, the Fund-raising Committee, and in later years, the Aquatic Society, "fought tooth and nail" to bring an indoor pool to the community. "The more the committee was told *no*, the harder the committee fought to realize their dream."

Reg Olsen, who had been a source of unfailing determination throughout much of the pool's fund-raising history, announced his impending resignation as president of the society on November 22, 2000, and on November 29 Jim McAllister was installed as the new president.

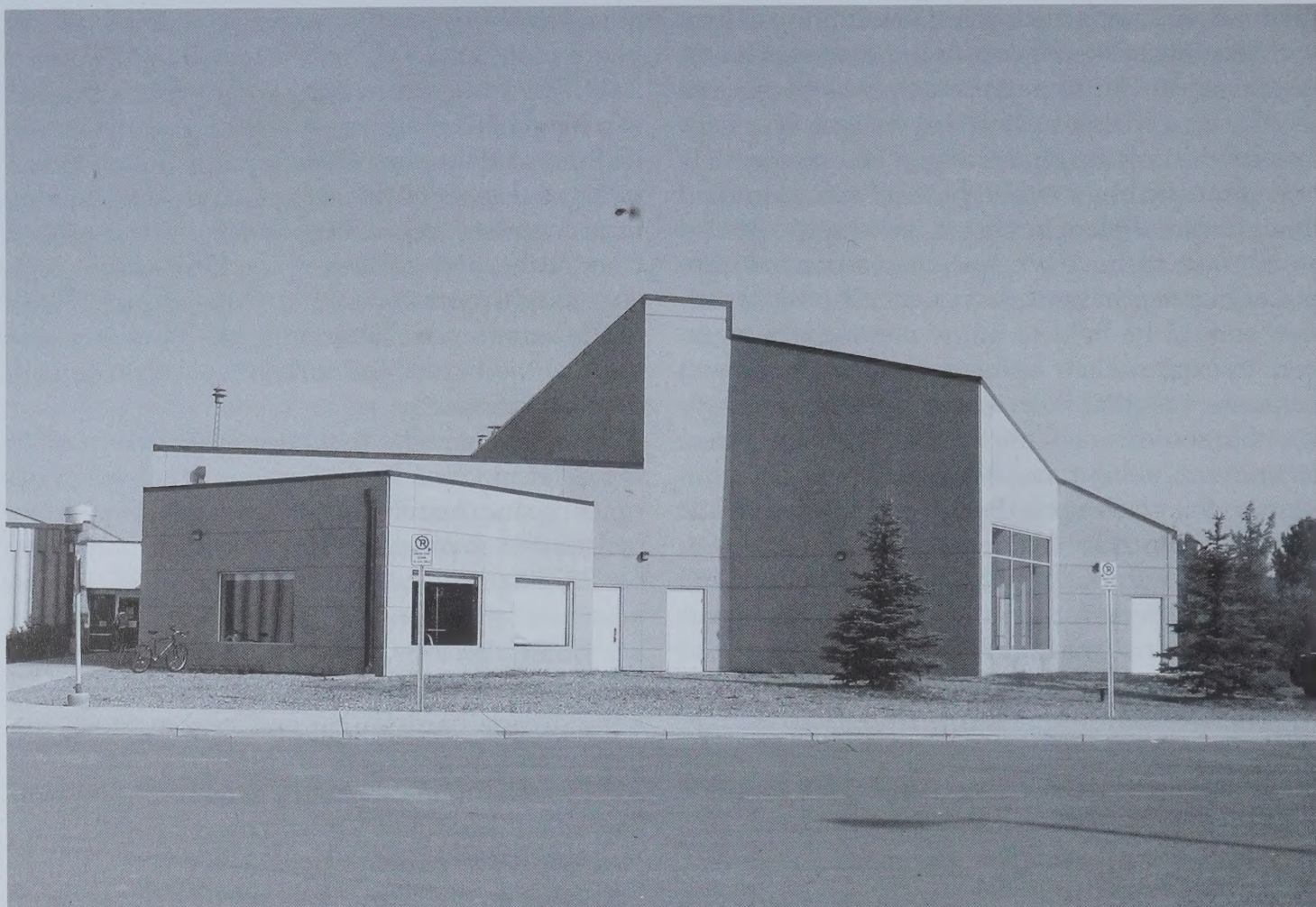
Finally, on April 10, 2001, the new pool was filled with 6000 gallons of water. The fulfilment of a big dream, hard fought and long awaited, had finally occurred.

The first manager of the Sundre and District Aquaplex was Karen Burns-Lukas from Calgary. Her focus in her new position was community fitness, and in the years since, through the leadership of several managers, this has remained a primary goal.

Today, in addition to the pool itself, the Aquaplex offers the community a modern fitness centre, with coaches when required and affordable rates. Swimmers and fitness enthusiasts of all ages and levels take part in the many programs offered by the centre. The Aquaplex is also a favoured location for children's birthday "pool parties" and a special area is set up especially for this purpose.

Many organizations, corporations, businesses, groups and individuals can take credit for the building of this wonderful facility in our town, and not the least of these are the volunteers who proved that Sundre really is "The Little Town That Could" by refusing to give up, even when things looked utterly hopeless. Some of these very special people, not including those already mentioned, are listed below:

Rick Smith; Sheila Duchar; Paul Gleeson; Dean Schneidner; Joanna Dichrow; Kevin Humphries; Kevin Irving; Ron Cottrell; Glen Smith; Roberta McLeod; Myron Bignold; Marty Lange; Daryl Peters; Sharon Peters; Ted Kostenuke and Bob McIntyre.



Sundre & District Aquaplex in 2007

Natural Disaster Hits Sundre and Area

The Great Flood of 2005

An Eye-witness Account by Daryl Smith

For the week preceding June 18th, 2005, anxious residents had been keeping a close eye on the Red Deer River as days of torrential rains continued, filling and overflowing tributaries and soaking the ground to the point of saturation. Soon, the levels of the Big Red were much higher than normal. The fast moving and murky, brown water was being monitored almost constantly. Living in the southwest part of town, and very close to the river, I was among those who could be seen several times a day standing close to the river bank, trying to gauge how much the water had risen over the previous few hours. Then, a sudden break in the weather allowed the levels to recede somewhat, bringing a collective sigh of relief from officials and

homeowners. For a while, it appeared the river would not burst its banks after all.

The sudden break in the rain was short lived and, like the proverbial calm before the storm, it heralded a period of intense flooding that Sundre and area residents will not soon forget.

On Saturday June 18th, 2005, after once more experiencing days of constant and unusually heavy rain, The Red Deer River, James River, Bearberry Creek, Little Red Deer River, and every creek and stream in the area, overflowed their banks and rushed into the surrounding countryside like several huge and greedy predators, gobbling up the landscape as though it were prey.

It was forty years *to the day* since Sundre's last major flood and, since that 1965 deluge, dikes had been installed on the Big Red to protect the more vulnerable areas of town. One can only imagine how much more devastating the 2005 flood might have been had the dikes not been there.

I got the call to help out on the Emergency Response Team at the Town Office about 8:00 am, but I was instructed to first take whatever precau-

tions I could to secure my own home. I walked out and saw that the normally harmless little Prairie Creek, which runs past the back of my property, was already close to the top of its banks, having backed up from where it enters the Red Deer River, just a short distance downstream. I walked out to the road and saw the river had already flowed into Greenwood Park and that the little footbridge near Riverside RV Park was partially submerged. It was a frightening sight.

Back in the house, I quickly unplugged electrical equipment and dragged all my photo albums out of the old trunk and piled them on top of a tall filing cabinet. At that moment, when I knew I was at risk of losing everything I owned, these suddenly became my most treasured inanimate possessions, for within their pages were more than fifty years of memories. I made sure my cat had access to the top of the fridge by dragging the kitchen table closer to it. Then I leashed my dog and together we climbed into my truck. The rain was still pounding the saturated earth and as I drove away from my home, I was struck by the reality that it might never be a home again. The Red Deer River was already only two hundred feet or so from my door.

At the Town Office, the Emergency Response Team was already working full out, taking calls, working with emergency teams, plotting escape routes for residents, should the need to evacuate become necessary, and then changing them as one access road after another became impassable due to the flooding. Very soon, the only way out of town was via Highway 27, and that too was at risk because of the real possibility of damage to the Sundre Bridge by the scores of large trees that were being swept downstream. Stories were already coming in about homes in the countryside being inundated by the floodwaters; bridges being washed out; livestock stranded on islands in flooded pastures, or, like some of the local wildlife, being swept away in the current. The threat to human life was suddenly very real.

Shortly after noon, I took a break and, at the urging of teammates, decided to go and check on my house. As I turned west onto Main Avenue, my mouth fell open in shock. What appeared to be a two-foot wall of water was heading east down the roadway towards me and then draining into the lower lying streets to the south. Small trees, tires and other debris were bouncing along on the floodwaters, which had swept in from out of town

from the overflowing Bearberry Creek. Despite this, it appeared that vehicles were manipulating the water successfully so I continued on. Turning left onto 3rd Street, I passed the Sundre Motor Inn and saw a fire truck parked near the culvert that diverts Prairie Creek under the road. By that time I had realized that the water was deep and I was afraid that if I stopped my vehicle it would stall and force me to abandon it. I ploughed on through, which the fire crew probably didn't appreciate as their purpose was to discourage through traffic, but almost immediately I realized I could not get close to my house. The overflow from the Bearberry Creek from the west had met the overflow from the Red Deer River to the east and the flooded road had already spilled its cargo of silt and water dangerously close to the adjacent homes. My own lawn was partially submerged. I saw rescue workers knocking on my neighbours' doors and with a sickening feeling in my stomach, realized the full impact of this disaster. I parked on an area of higher ground and, during a brief period of stunned immobility, found myself worrying about my goldfish, which were outside in the pond - a concern that most people would not have considered high priority at that time! I sat there for perhaps five minutes, and then decided to go back to the Town Office. Floodwater levels had risen even higher, even in that brief few minutes, and as I drove away I soon found my vehicle in danger of being swamped. With the help of one of the rescue vehicles, I was able to go west as far as the Kings Motel, where I had no choice but to abandon my little truck and leave it to the whims of fate. My rescuer took me back to the Town Office, along with my dog, where I learned that over a thousand town residents on the south side of the Bearberry Bridge, east of the Sundre Bridge, and from the west side of town, were being evacuated, including those in most of the seniors residences. Those evacuees who had nowhere else to go were given shelter at Olds College, with school buses brought in to provide transportation.

Reports continued to come to the Town Office about what was happening outside Sundre: The James River Bridge had completely washed out; holiday trailers at Westward Ho Campground were being moved out as quickly as possible, but for many it was too late and several had been swept into the river; there was a story of country residents desperately trying to move a mobile home out of the path of the rising flood, while others

watched as their farm land - their livelihood - disappeared under several feet of sludge and debris.

As levels continued to rise in the Sundre flood, and concerns intensified regarding the ongoing threat to the bridge, the decision was made to move the Disaster Services command post to the club house at the Sundre Golf Course, across the river and up on the hill. As I drove with Councillor George Taylor across the bridge, I looked out at the raging Red Deer River - by then hundreds of feet wider than normal and, to my eyes, very close to the underside of the very structure we were driving on. I had lived in Sundre for thirty-one years and never seen anything like it.

Much later, as tired emergency workers told grim stories of all they had seen that day, I became convinced that not only had I lost my home, but also my means of transportation. I imagined my little Dodge truck tumbling along the swollen river, perhaps on its way to Glenifer Lake. My goldfish, I suppose, were a small matter compared to the damage that had probably been inflicted on my home, but I found myself mentally obsessing about the probability of them being swept from their pond and into the murky depths of the floodwaters. I wondered if my cat was safe, whether my computer and photo albums were destroyed. Small possessions were suddenly incredibly precious.

I struggled to stay focussed on the job at hand, answering phone enquiries about the flood status, advising people what to do and where to go, but eventually the phone calls subsided and as the floods began to recede a little in Sundre, a few people were allowed back into town if they had homes in the area north of the Bearberry Bridge. My son and his family lived in the north and I made arrangements to go there. As I was driven into town late that night, it was amazing to see how quickly the floodwaters in town had already receded, but as the water levels went down on the Big Red and the Bearberry Creek, the Little Red Deer River at Westward Ho was still to inflict its greatest damage. Homes in Sleepy Hollow became inundated by the rapidly spreading sludge and water; groundwater, having nowhere else to go, swamped septic systems and wells.

Like so many people that day, I think I was in a state of emotional shock as I fell into exhausted sleep. I woke in the morning to voices telling me my home was safe, and also my truck. I thought I was dreaming and told the voices to go away and

let me sleep. But it wasn't a dream: The floodwaters had gone through my garage and halfway up my front lawn, but no further; the little Prairie Creek at the back had come to the very top of its bank, and no further; the crawl space under my home was bone dry; my goldfish were swimming around in their pond, unaware and undisturbed.

I was extremely lucky. My next door neighbours to the east were devastated by floodwaters that hit them from three different directions, but even they were lucky compared to the many people who suffered irreparable damage and the loss of their homes and property, mostly those in the rural areas. Many basements in Sundre were flooded; many furnaces, hot water tanks, washers and driers would have to be replaced; sewers had backed up; silt covered everything the flood had touched. It was very serious and very overwhelming for all the victims, but there had been no loss of life, and given the circumstances, that alone was a great blessing.

Sleepy Hollow residents at Westward Ho were hit badly, with enormous amounts of damage done to virtually every home in that area. But with the help of a small army of volunteers, most of them were able to clean up the mess, salvage what was salvageable and go forward with their lives. For some, picking up the pieces took a little longer, for their homes were destroyed.

In Sundre, the rivers and creeks began to return to less threatening levels. Greenwood Campground was in disarray though, with broken picnic tables and silt and debris everywhere. I found items from my own yard sticking up through the mud there. But very quickly, apart from the mess the rivers had left behind along its banks, it was hard to imagine the Town had declared a state of emergency a day or so earlier. The sun came out and the puddles dried up, some businesses reopened their doors, the debris was removed from the streets. The enforced State of Emergency did continue for a while though. The Town water system had become polluted and residents remained on boil water alert for several days. Water restrictions continued for a longer period, with one well still out of service. Within a very short time, Alberta Premier, Ralph Klein, arrived with other government officials, for an assessment of the damage and a meeting with Town and County reps at the Town Office. Disaster funding was promised. Shortly afterwards groups were organized to assist people in submitting their claims.

Many organizations were involved in the emergency services provided on the day of the flood: fire services, police, forestry, EMS, Search and Rescue personnel, the Disaster Services Team and Town Council and staff. School bus drivers came into town to help evacuate people in need of transportation and many, many residents volunteered in any way necessary. There are always stories of heroism and inspiration following a natural disaster, some of them telling of very simple acts of kindness, neighbour-to-neighbour or stranger-to-stranger. One incident that I will always remember from the day of the flood is that of Les and Edna Gwynn coming into the Town Office. The electrical business they owned, and attached home, on the west end of town, had been one of the first in-town casualties of the Bearberry Creek deluge; the overflowing Prairie Creek had hit them from the back. They had been forced to abandon their premises and had taken up residence on dry land in their motor home. While heavy rolls of electrical cable from the Gwynn Electric yard bounced through town on the crest of the floodwaters, the Gwynns came to the Town Office, not looking for help for themselves, but to offer their assistance in any way possible. That simple, selfless act by ordinary people, who were in dire circumstances themselves, will always, to me, exemplify the very heart of the Sundre community and the people who live here.



Flooding on Main Avenue, A Little West of the 4-Way Stop. *Photo courtesy of Jacqueline Smith*

Following the flood, the acts of kindness and community spirit continued: Greenwood Neighbourhood Place worked tirelessly to help the

endless stream of individuals and families in need of assistance and information; Sundre Petroleum Operators Group (SPOG) organized a band of volunteers to help individuals with the clean up, Oil Companies donated money and services, as did individuals and local companies. The Sundre Round Up published the Flood of 2005 booklet, with photos and stories of that event, and all proceeds were donated to Greenwood Neighbourhood Place for use in their various services and to top up the flood relief fund.



Flooding at Fas Gas Service.

Photo courtesy of Jacqueline Smith



Flooding in Front of Sundre Motors.

Photo courtesy of Jacqueline Smith

The flood of 2005 was the first serious flood to hit Sundre in several decades. The addition of dikes on the Red Deer River locally and the construction of the Dickson Dam, downstream, had perhaps lulled the community into a false sense of

security. Those who have lived through previous local floods were not surprised that it was the Bearberry Creek that had presented the biggest threat to the community in the spring of 2005, for it had often been a source of serious flooding in the past.

Nearly three years after Sundre's most recent flood, work is ongoing in regard to fixing up washed out roads and bridges in the area, and in coming up with plans to shore up extended areas of dangerously eroded riverbank. The community learned a great deal from what happened in 2005, and while most victims of that flood have picked up the pieces and, in some cases, started over, residents who witnessed the devastation first hand are left with no doubt of the fact that when it comes right down to it, in times of extreme weather conditions, nature still holds most of the aces.



The Bearberry Creek Bridge



**The Red Deer River Surges Close to the Under-
side of the Sundre Bridge.** *Photo courtesy of
Jacqueline Smith*



Flooding at "Sleepy Hollow", Westward Ho.
Photo courtesy of Jacqueline Smith



Sundre Transfer Station



**Flooding on 3rd Street SW with Rescue Workers
Knocking on Doors and Instructing
Homeowners to Evacuate**

Holding the Whispers of the Past

The Historical Significance of Snake Hill

For centuries before the first white person left his footprints on the western banks of the Red Deer River, Indian moccasins, and later, the hooves of unshod Indian ponies, sculpted trails through the areas between what we know now as Morley and the Kootney Plains. The Stoney Nakoda Nation, which includes the Chiniki, Wesley and Bearspaw tribes, were very familiar with the waterway we call the Red Deer River, the source of which is found at Red Deer Lakes and Drummond Glacier in Banff National Park. Hunting parties from the southwest frequently followed its course as far as Sundre, before branching off to follow the Clearwater and South Saskatchewan Rivers en route to Nordegg and beyond. These parties of hunters were also known to travel to Pigeon Lake, west of Wetaskiwin.

Entire families travelled together to participate in the hunts, which would provide meat, furs and skins to sustain the tribes through the harsh winter months. The men did most of the hunting while the women and children helped butcher and preserve the game and prepare the furs and skins for various uses, which included tipi construction and clothing.

As these families travelled through the area that is now Sundre, they either skirted around or climbed over Snake Hill. The Nakoda name for this serpent-shaped prominence that rises out of the surrounding flatlands was Aa Ba He Tinda – Kinnickinnic Flats. Roughly translated, Kinnickinnic means 'that which is mixed', referring to the custom of the native people to mix the shredded bark of the dogwood shrub with other compounds to produce a type of tobacco often used in religious ceremonies. This may suggest that some of these ceremonies, perhaps related to a request for a successful hunt, were held in the vicinity of Snake Hill at various times.

Sadly, the hill and surrounding area also earned another name as white explorers, traders, lawmakers and settlers moved through or into the area: Due to the relatively small population and scattered nature of the tribes, there were few natural diseases amongst Canada's indigenous peoples prior to the arrival of the white man. Measles,

whooping cough, diphtheria, syphilis, even the flu, were virtually unknown in North America prior to the sixteenth century. Consequently, when the arrival of the white race led to the introduction of such illnesses to Canada's aboriginal population, the effects were devastating. The Indian children and adults, having no acquired resistance, succumbed to the diseases in great numbers. But it was the smallpox virus, deadly even in Europe and among the white settlers who were trickling into Canada, which took the greatest toll amongst the Indian people and it contributed greatly to the reduction of the First Nations population in Canada from over twelve million in the 1500's to approximately half a million in the early 1900's. The impact of smallpox is said to have played a very significant role in weakening native resistance to colonization. Members of the Stoney Nation, along with others who passed through this area, did not escape the horrendous impact of the smallpox virus and many died as a result of contracting the disease. Some died on the trails that wound through the Sundre area and were buried close by. And so it was that Kinnickinnic Flats (the area around Snake Hill) also became known as Smallpox Flats amongst First Nations peoples. A smallpox epidemic that hit Western Canada in 1871 had a catastrophic impact on the indigenous peoples. It is believed that in the Sundre area alone hundreds of Native people are likely to have died as a result of this disease.

The bodies of those who had succumbed to the smallpox virus had to be buried quickly, in part because the hunting parties were only passing through the area and needed to keep moving, but also in order to prevent further exposure of the highly contagious disease to other members of the group. The mortality rate was thought to be about 95% and the spread was extremely rapid. Very few members of an infected band escaped the sickness. The graves that were hollowed out of the ground for the victims were very shallow, usually no deeper than about eighteen inches. This was probably due to the need for haste combined with the conditions of the earth and the inadequate digging tools.

It is very likely that, along with those who died of other causes, many of those who succumbed to smallpox in the Sundre area are buried on Snake Hill. It is also believed that in later years, after settlement of the area, several white people shared

a final resting place with the Indians who had died several decades before them. Local resident Jean Gochee, who came to the Sundre area in 1947, kept in contact with a student minister by the name of Gerry Hutchinson, who served the United Church at that time. Mr. Hutchinson, now living in Edmonton, distinctly remembers being present at the burial of a young white child on Snake Hill, and another Sundre resident, Patricia Toone, remembers seeing the graves of white people in the general area of the hill, when she was a girl.

It is possible that a major event took place on Snake Hill prior to the arrival of white settlers. Although there does not appear to be any hard evidence, some people in the Morley area believe, based on information passed by word of mouth through the generations, that a ceasefire took place on the hill between the Cree, Blackfoot and Stoney Nations. If this could be verified, it would add further historical importance to this much loved landmark.

In 2003, after considerable evidence had been gathered which might support the idea of numerous graves being located on the hill, Mrs. Gochee, who is a long-time member of the Sundre Historical Society, and several other interested parties arranged for two dowsers, also known as diviners or witchers, to walk around Snake Hill. Dowsers are believed to have extraordinary powers to detect water, metals or other elements beneath the surface of the earth by using a simple type of divining rod or bar, which can be either metal or wood, to locate buried materials. Mr. Ernest Kvarnber, from Leduc, used a fine copper rod and Mr. Jim Haug, from Bergen, used a wooden rod. The two men walked together and in every instant, both men found that their rods dipped to the ground in exactly the same places. At the end of the day, the two men had located in excess of four hundred probable gravesites.

The next step was to call in the services of Mason Exploration, a geological exploration company that uses sensitive detecting equipment to locate underground deposits of materials, which can include carbon. Two outfits explored Snake Hill and found considerable evidence of what they called anomalies - things that are "peculiar, irregular, abnormal, or difficult to classify". Most of these findings matched the findings of Mr. Kvarnber and Mr. Haug.

Historians, Native Elders, members of the Ministerial Association and other concerned local

citizens came together to discuss ways in which they might pay tribute to the important historical significance of possible graves of both Indian travellers and white travellers and settlers on and around Snake Hill.

Records of the Sundre area from the past hundred and twenty years show that the relationship between the white settlers and the Indian bands that regularly passed through the area were very good. Friendships were formed between individuals and families within the two cultures and many of these bonds endured through several generations. It seems very fitting that some of these people, white and brown, should share a final resting place and be given tribute *together* for the part they each played in Sundre's history.

Plans were made by those involved to erect a commemorative plaque or cairn on the hill and to hold a special ceremony to which local dignitaries and special guests, including elders from the Morley Reserve, would be invited to attend. However, for various reasons, the event did not take place. In 2008, interest in this project is ongoing and organizers hope that by summer a metal cairn will be placed on the hill and that a dedication ceremony will be held involving First Nations people, Mr. Hutchinson, Sundre's Mayor and other officials. Whenever it takes place, this event will represent a significant acknowledgement of the area's diverse past.



Many Aspects of Sundre are Very Different to What they were a Hundred Years Ago, but Snake Hill Still Remains Mostly Unchanged

Snake Hill is a natural recreation area situated in the heart of Sundre. Roughly shaped like a serpent,

with its head closest to the community it serves, the hill offers many great opportunities for nature lovers and fitness enthusiasts. It's park like setting and trails, along with toboggan runs, and half pipe, are maintained by the Town of Sundre. The hill was the subject of controversy and public outcry in the 1970's when it was suggested it could be developed for residential use. However, in the early part of the twenty-first century, Snake Hill is not far removed from its natural state and, just as it continues to stand sentry over the community - so the community continues to watch over it.

Snippets from the Second Half of the Century

Nazarene Church Sponsors First Cubs Group in 1951

The Sundre Church of the Nazarene introduced a Cub Scout group in 1951, with Wally Dunwoody as its first leader.

In 1958 the United Church was granted the charter for the Cubs, which was named the 1st Jackson Pack in honour of J.R. Jackson.

For many years, the cubs met in the little schoolhouse that had been brought into town and placed beside the United Church in the 1940s, but in 1985 a new scout hall was built just east of the existing curling rink.

A Scouts group, 1st Jackson Scout Troop, was also introduced by the United Church in the 1950's. Harold Sylvester was its first leader. However, the Scouts were not operating very long before they were disbanded. The pack started up again in 1957, with Janet Morris as leader. Mary Lund was the Group Committee Chairperson at that time.

1951 Community Says No to Beer Parlour

On January 19th, 1951, the Village of Sundre held a referendum to decide whether the community should allow the sale of liquor through the establishment of a beer parlour. A result of seventy-four in favour and sixty-three against fell slightly short of the sixty percent vote required to approve

the proposal, and so Sundre remained a "dry" community. A few years later, with the completion of the new Sundre Hotel, a liquor licence was granted and the opening of beer parlour, still in operation today, brought the village into a new era.

1951 Head Tax Levied on Non-taxpaying Residents

If you didn't own a home in Sundre in 1951, were over the age of twenty-one and gainfully employed, and if you resided in the village for sixty days or more in any calendar year, you could expect to be hit with a Village Tax of four dollars a year. There wasn't much money in the village coffers in the early 1950s. It is possible the introduction of this special tax was a means of easing that situation to some degree.

Rodeo Cancelled in 1951

Despite several attempts to reschedule the event, organizers were forced to cancel the Sundre Rodeo in 1951 due to unusually heavy rainfall through much of the summer.

1951 Unofficial Opening of Curling Rink

On May 24th, 1951, around a hundred people gathered to celebrate the completion of Sundre's first curling rink. A band called "The Arcadians" provided the music for a dance, which took place on a temporary dance floor.

Hagen Store Burns in 1952

The Hagen Store, built by Sundre's founder, N.T. Hagen, around 1910, burned to the ground late in 1952. At the time, the store was owned by John Macleod and operated by Bob Rankin.

The First Oil Boom 1954

The first major oil find around Sundre occurred in the early 1950's and the first field to go into production, in 1954, was located four and a half miles north of the community.

Mammoth Remains Found in 1959

It was while the County was taking gravel from Jake Severn's property, just a hundred yards from his farm buildings, when Gerald Murphy's

machine unearthed a strange looking bone about four feet down. Mrs. Jean Severns saved the bone, which was about eighteen inches long, but no one was able to identify the species of animal it came from. Eventually, the bone was sent to the Royal Ontario Museum where it was identified as being from a tibia from a Mammoth Columbi, or Columbian Mammoth. Dated at between 10,240 and 10,325, the bone was said to be one of the youngest dated mammoth bones found to that date and the only dated mammoth bone found in Alberta. The specimen was treated with a preservative and became the property of the museum.

Rod and Gun Club 1960

The first meeting of the Sundre Rod and Gun Club was held in the Calgary Power building. One of the club's main attractions was an annual Fish Derby and prizes were handed out in various categories.

Sundre Choralaires 1960

Formed by Betty Allen in 1960, the Sundre Choralaires came into being in the living room of the Alf Thomas family home. Early members included Neil Vanderzwan, Tony Hoevers, Fred Turman, Bob and Martha Rankin. The group was available to sing at wedding receptions, parties, and other special events. They disbanded after providing many years of musical entertainment to the community.

First Mercury Vapour Lights 1960

Five mercury-vapour lights and seven radial lights were installed along Main Street from the eastern approach of the Sundre Bridge and running west.

Natural Gas for Sundre 1961

Natural Gas, via the Alberta Gas Trunk Line, became a reality for Sundre residents in November 1961.

First Sidewalks 1961

Sidewalks were constructed from the east side of the Sundre Bridge, on the south side of the road,

to the present 4-way stop, and then north to the school on the west side of the road.

Sundre Sub-Aquatic Club formed in 1962

There were fourteen members of the Sundre Sub-Aquatic Club when it was formed in 1962. Jack Lewis, owner of Jack's Diving Shop in Sundre, gave diving instruction at the Little Red Deer River at Westward Ho. The club also held an annual picnic at this location.

Sundre's First Pharmacist 1962

Archie McKechnie was born and raised in Calgary and graduated from the University of Alberta in Pharmacy in the very early 1960s. He and his wife, Sheilagh, moved to Sundre in 1962 and Archie opened his first drugstore in the building now occupied by Sears and Sew Perfect.

Once the hospital opened in 1968, Archie served as part time pharmacist there and was on call 24 hours a day. He built a new drug store, McKechnie Drugs, in 1970, also providing space for Dr. Alan White's medical clinic. These buildings are now occupied by Century 21 Alta West Realty and the Harvest Moon Restaurant.

Street Dance a Hit in 1965

A street dance, held in conjunction with the Sundre Rodeo was first introduced to Sundre and area residents in 1965. Held on a Friday night, it initially took place at the 4-way stop, in front of the Macleod's Red and White Store. After a few years, its location was moved to the school parking lot. The Dunwoody Orchestra played at the dance every year. It was discontinued in 1976.

Street Numbers 1965

In 1965, Town Council approved changing all Sundre street names to numbers. The consensus was that this move would make it easier to find residences and businesses.

A Swimming Pool For Sundre 1967

Sundre's first swimming pool was built as a Centennial project in 1967. It was an outdoor pool and it opened from the May Long Weekend until Labour Day each year.

Beaver Pack Started in 1972

Nicola Smith (Godwin) was leader of the first Beaver pack in Sundre in 1972. The group folded, but started up again in 1979 with Shirley Garnham as leader.

V&G Store Changes Hands in 1974

Jack and Pat Valens became the new owners of the Sundre Variety and Gift Store, on the northwest corner of Main Avenue and Centre Street, in 1974, when they purchased the business from Dave and Phyllis Burke.

1976 Wild Rose Court Officially Opened

On November 29th, 1976, the first independent living residence for seniors was opened in Sundre. A plaque was presented to the wife of the late Reverend Martin McLaren in tribute for the many hours of dedicated service her husband had contributed on behalf of Sundre Seniors. Two more seniors' residences, Hagen Manor and Pioneer Place were built in the years that followed.

Sundre School Choir and Sundre Bellringers, 1977

Teachers Jean Dickman and Pat Valens founded and led the Sundre School Choir and the Sundre Bellringers in 1977. Both groups have entertained the community and won many competitions over the years.

Sunshine Club 1977

The Sunshine Club, a senior citizen's club formed in 1977, was the organization responsible for the introduction of the Sunshine Bus. The bus, a large van at that time, was used to transport seniors to special events and shopping in the city. Now called the Sundre Community Van, services are available to all groups and individuals.

Seniors Centre Planned in 1978

Championed by the Sundre & District Recreation Board, the Sunshine Club and the Happy Seniors Club, initial plans were laid for a Senior's Recreation Centre at a meeting at the Elk's Hall, chaired by Dennis Ratcliff, on March 28, 1978. The hall was filled to capacity, with support from

local organizations, including the Elks, the Legion, The Lions, the Royal Purple and the Chamber of Commerce. It was estimated the Seniors Recreation Centre would cost in the region of \$188,000.00, with a grant available to match monies raised in the community.

Population Growth in 1978

A tremendous boom in both residential and commercial construction occurred in Sundre in 1978 and the population increased to 1,447.

Local Man Charged with 2nd Degree Murder – 1979

When two Calgary men were joy riding through the ditches west of Sundre in their 4 WD vehicle in the early hours of October 8, 1979, they could not have known the fate that was in store for them. Stopping briefly outside a residence, shots rang through the darkness, resulting in the death of one of the men and injury to the other. A thirty-seven-year-old man was charged with 2nd degree murder and attempted murder.

White Water Whirlers Club formed in 1980

Les and Edna Gwynn and Dennis and Debbie Morrison founded the White Water Whirlers Square Dance Club in 1980. At the annual Jamboree in 1985, 150 dancers attended from several Alberta locations.

IGA Opens in 1980

Local businessman and developer Tom Mennear moved into the brand new IGA store in the new Prairie Creek Shopping Centre in 1980.

Dental Clinic For Sundre in 1980

Dr. Roy Huisman and his wife Linda made their home in Sundre and subsequently opened a Dental Office. Some years later, Dr. Huisman was forced to close his practice following a serious injury to his hand.

Arena's Future at Risk Due to Large Deficit in 1980

With a deficit of \$30,000.00, the Sundre Skat-

ing Arena was going through some very tough times in 1980. An Ad Hoc Committee, formed and chaired by former Mayor, Neil Vanderzwan, put forward an array of cost cutting measures, many based on a "user pay" system.

Venturer's Club Up and Running in 1982

Wayne Burkholder was the leader of Sundre's first Venturer's group in 1981. There were eight boys enrolled as members at that time. In 1984 Bob Bennett took over as leader.

1982 Armed Bank Robbery

Following a mid-morning armed robbery at the Bank of Montreal in Sundre, youths took off with \$32,000.00 in cash in a stolen Lincoln Continental. Local police spotted the car driving through town at 130 km per hour and gave chase. The 6 suspects were apprehended and the 2 ring-leaders each received 6-year sentences.

Family and Community Support Services 1982

The Town of Sundre established FCSS in 1982 and Carol Ganot was hired as its first director. The first meeting of the Advisory Board was held on April 5th, with Henry Bowen elected to the position of President.

New Sewage Treatment Plant 1982

Work began on Sundre's new sewage treatment facility in April 1982. The total cost of the project was expected to be \$2,330,000.00. A government grant of \$1,709,550.00 helped finance the new plant. The old plant was beginning to pollute the Red Deer River.

Lillian McGonigal Was Citizen of the Year in 1982

Longtime Sundre resident Lillian McGonigal was voted Lion's Club Citizen of the Year in 1982 as a result of her many years of kindness to Sundre residents in need of shelter and assistance.

School Plans Computer Purchase in 1983

In 1983, Sundre Schools owned only one computer, an Apple, but was planning to buy a second at a cost of \$5,000.00.

Community TV Channel Introduced in 1983

A cooperative effort between local schools and communities resulted in the introduction of Channel 5 TV station in 1983. This station allowed residents to keep informed of local events and news items.

Wrigley's Food Market and Two Other Stores Destroyed by Fire 1983

Originally the Red and White Store, operated by Rod Macleod from 1948, Wrigley's Food Market, opened by Walt and Diana Wrigley in 1981, burn to the ground on April 4, 1983. Also destroyed in the fire were The Taperette Hair Salon and Radio Shack. Twenty-five Sundre firemen along with 10 from Olds and thirty town residents fought the blaze. Pauline Michaelchuck, owner of The Gold Tree on the other side of the street, opened up her store to provide coffee and sandwiches to the fire crews, police, and other emergency workers.

Greenwood Park Officially Opened 1983

Sundre's present Municipal Campground, Greenwood Park, named after longtime Sundre resident and animal trainer, Russ Greenwood, was officially opened in 1983, with Mayor Neil Vanderzwan performing the dedication. The Town of Sundre and the Chamber of Commerce shared the official honours of this significant occasion. Russ Greenwood, whose former property became part of the existing park, was escorted to the event in a reconditioned Model T Ford owned by Sundre Motors and was invited to cut the ribbon and declare the newly named park officially open. 600 people attended the event and enjoyed the Baron of Beef, provided by the Town of Sundre, and salads provided by the Chamber.

Foothills Retreat Lodge Open 1984

Foothills Retreat Lodge was officially opened on November 2, 1984. Olds-Didsbury MLA, Stephen Stiles, conducted the dedication.

Don's Mens Wear Destroyed by Fire 1984

Don's Mens Wear, owned by Michael Zimmerman, was totally destroyed in a fire

started by an individual on September 2, 1984. The culprit, a local man, was charged with break, enter and arson.

New Sundre High School Opens November 1984

Myron Thompson was principal when the brand new Sundre High School opened its doors on November 23, 1984. Among other dignitaries, MLA Stephen Stiles addressed the 700 people in attendance. Reeve Syd Vollmin reminisced on the fact that the first Sundre High School had been heated by a wood-burning stove and that access to the principal's office was reached via a stepladder!

Town of Sundre Joins the Computer Age in 1985

Town Administrator, Harvey Doering, was the recipient of a brand new IBM PC in January 1985. The computer was to be set up to handle all customer accounts.

Sundre Airport Opened 1985

Although Sundre had had an airstrip for many years, it was not until September 1, 1985 that an official airport was opened by MLA Stephen Stiles, Mayor Sam Campkin and Reeve Sid Vollmin.

Help for Victims of Family Violence Group Introduced in 1985

Lisa Lough, in cooperation with Sundre FCSS Director Cindy Shyback, introduced this service for victims of family abuse in 1985. Funding came from the community, Government and FCSS.

Shell Caroline Natural Gas Field 1986

The Shell Caroline field was discovered in February 1986. The discovery well was located at 7-18-34-4-W5M, 6.4 kms (4 miles) SE of the James River Store and south of Highway 587. It was drilled by High Tower 18E. It is currently called Caroline Well #23 and located near Shell's South Compressor Station.

Spring Storm Brings a Few Days of the Pioneering Life Back to Sundre 1986

Trans-Alta Utilities called the May, 1986,

snowstorm the worst in the company's history as employees struggled to plow through roads blocked by huge drifts, to access the damage caused to two thousand power poles in Central Alberta. Many poles in the Sundre area simply snapped under the weight of the snow on the lines and electricity customers were without power for at least several days and, in some cases, up to two weeks, while the poles were being replaced.

Local Teen First Female to Fly Solo From Sundre Airport 1986

Cheryl Goodwin was "flying high", literally, on her sixteenth birthday on May 12, 1986. She took to the skies on her first solo flight, becoming the first female to earn her wings at the Sundre Airport flight-training program.

A Flag for Sundre 1986

Bill Scott's granddaughter, Rhonda Peterson, designed Sundre's official flag, which depicts a buffalo and a wagon wheel, as a tribute to long-time resident Russ Greenwood, and also the prairie/foothills/mountain landscape surrounding Sundre. The flag was introduced at a Council Meeting in June 1986.

Weather Station West of Sundre 1986

At the suggestion of Alberta Environment, a Weather Gathering Station was installed at Sundre Air Park. Thelma Graves was responsible for recording the local conditions. The Weather Station is still in use today.

Aryan Nations Group Formation Causes Shock in The Community 1986

When organizer Terry Long opened an Aryan Nations camp in the Caroline area, 500 Sundre area residents turned out for a protest meeting held at the High School. The local white supremacy group operated for several years, about thirty miles northwest of Sundre, and despite its attempts to keep a low profile it was frequently the focus of media attention on a national level. Eventually, under the pressure of ongoing public outrage and local opposition, the group disbanded and Terry Long moved to the USA.

Swim Club Formed in 1986

The Sundre Otters Swim Club was formed in 1986 with 24 members between the ages of six and fourteen. Verna McFadden was one of the organizers.

"Loonie" Introduced in 1987

Canada's new dollar coin was introduced in 1987 and quickly became known as the "Loonie" because of the loon featured on the back of it.

“Memories” Photo Albumn After 1950



Above: 1950s Panther 1 Oil Derek Now Located East of Sundre Bridge.

Above Right: Pump Jack

Right: The Old Town Shop

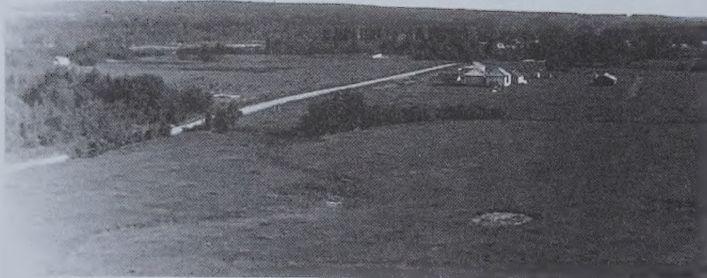
Below: Some of Sundre's Oldest Homes on Centre Street North





1950s Aerial View of Sundre Looking North from the Sundre Hotel (bottom left). Sundre Motors is at centre with the Red & White Store on its left and the Sundre Contracting Building across the street at left. The United Church is a little above Sundre Contrating. Corral Cafe is at centre, bottom of page.

Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum & Gary Vooy's



Looking North from Sundre in 1953.

Photo courtesy of Mary Lund



South Side of Main Avenue East. Date Unknown.

Photo Courtesy of Sundre Museum & Gary Vooy's



Centre Street N. Date Unknown.
Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum



**Sundre Cafe was Operated by Jack & Vi Phillips
 on Sundre's East Side.**
Photo courtesy of Mary Lund



Aerial View of Sundre in the 1960s.
Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum & Gary Vooy's



Above: **Downtown Sundre 1963.**

Photo courtesy of Mary Lund

Right: **Sundre Parade 1960s.**

Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum

Below: **Aerial View of Sundre in About 1983.**

Photo courtesy of the Sundre Museum & Gary Vooy's



**First New Years Baby at the Sundre Hospital,
Randy Johnston with Parents Bob & Val.**

Hospital archives



1983 AERIAL VIEW OF SUNDRE - 1980's LOOKING NORTHEAST

Businesses Operating in Sundre In November 2007

1032319 ALBERTA LTD., DON BARTELL
1157652 ALBERTA LTD.
1ST CHOICE LANDSCAPING
4 FUN LTD., DEANNA & MARTY RINGLAND
5 PEAKS ADVENTURES LTD.
789785 AB LTD, CLIFFORD GIBBS

A & W SUNDRE. KATHY CHAMBERLAIN
ACL MANUFACTURING INC
ACTION EQUIPMENT RENTALS INC.
ADVANCED TELECOMMUNICATION LTD.
AG-AH PAH ENTERPRISES
AIRBORNE HEATING, 954019 ALBERTA LTD.
ALL ADVANTAGTE CONSTRUCTION
ALPHA AND OMEGA HOME BUILDERS LTD.
ALPINE CLEANING SERVICES LTD.
AL'S TAXI
ANGELA'S JANITORIAL SERVICES, ANGELA
DEAL
APPLIANCE WEST
AUTO PARTS PLUS

BANK OF MONTREAL
BARB'S FOOT CARE
BARNWOOD CREATIONS
BASELINE LOGGING (1999) LTD.
BEE & BEE PLUMBING & HEATING
BELFOR RESTORATION SERVICES
BELLE FASHIONS
BELL'S PLUMBING & HEATING
BERGEN ROAD LIQUOR STORE LTD, DON
DEWINETZ
BER-MAC ELECTRICAL AND
BIG SKY MARKET
BLACK DOG MOUNTAIN LTD.
BLUE SPRUCE PHONE BOOKS
BODY KNEADS MASSAGE THERAPY
BODY N SOUL MASSAGE THERAPY
BOW CROW DESIGN
BRAXXON EXCAVATION
BRIAN EVANS PLANNING & BLD LTD
BRUNO'S PET SERVICES
BRUNSWICK MOBILE GLASS LTD.
BUEN VIDA SPA & WELLNESS
BULLDOG INNS
BURGER BARON

C.N.E. STEAM CLEANING
CBK PIPEFITTING & CONSULTING INC.
CENTRAL ALBERTA RIBBON XCHANGE
CHINOOK COUNTRY INN LTD.
CLARK'S TRANSPORT LTD.
CLASSIC LUNCH & CAKERY
CODY CAR CARE CENTRE
COLDER BEER & LIQUOR STORE
CONOCO PHILLIPS CANADA
CONSIGNMENT CONNECTION
CORDAN LIQUIDATION
COSMOS DINING LOUNGE
COUGAR CLOTHING COMPANY
COUNTRY RENOVATIONS
COVERALL PIPELINE CONSTRUCTION LTD.
CURVES FOR WOMEN
CUTTING EDGE

DALE VOOYS TRUCKING LTD.
DALLMAN RESTORATION & BODY WORKS
DAOUD, NADER
DIVERSIFIED MAINTENANCE & FINISHING
TOUCH
DJ CATERING
DOUGAN'S SERVICE / SPEEDWAY GAS
DUANE SAUNDERS CO. LTD.

ED'S MAINTENANCE, ED LECEA

FAIRWAY LAWN & YARD MAINTENANCE

FALCON RIDGE GROUP INC
FAS GAS REALTY LTD
FLORADALE ENTERPRISES LTD.,
C/O DALE R. MARTIN
FOILS HAIR STUDIO
FORGET-ME-NOT FLOWERS
FORTIS ALBERTA
FOUNTAIN TIRE LIMITED
FRANK HUNT WELDING

GADGET'S COMPUTERS & ELECTRONICS
INC
GARDEN OF EDEN PRODUCE, GARRY
KOENIG
GOOD DAY CONVENIENCE

GRANNY'S COUNTRY KITCHEN
GREENHOUSE AND GARDEN CENTRE
GWYNN ELECTRIC

HAIGHT HOUSE CLEANING SERVICES
HAPPY FEET FOOT CARE
HARROW SPRAYING & SEEDING
HARVEST MOON RESTAURANT
HAUKEDAL ENTERPRISES INC.
HAZCO ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES LTD,
SHELLY SHAPKA
HEARTLAND FUNERAL SERVICES LTD
HEAVEN HELP US DELI, REMEDIES, TAXES
LTD.
HEY! STAY & PLAY INC.
HIGH COUNTRY CANVAS, C/O STEVE
WERDAL
HIGH COUNTRY TRUCK ACCESSORIES
HI-WAY 9 EXPRESS LTD.
HOMETOWN MACHINE LTD.
HONEY BEE'S LADIES WEAR
HUNT OIL CO CANADA

INSIDE/OUT HOME REPAIRS & RENOVATIONS

J.B'S BOBCAT SERVICE
JD TAGS DEVELOPMENT SERVICES LTD
JOKO'S CONVENIENCE STORE
JUST TRAVEL

KALLIS KONTRACTING
KELMAR LTD.
KGH MECHANICAL SYSTEMS LTD.
KINGS MOTEL
KOFFEE BINGE
KOKANEE HEAVY TRUCK & EQUIPMENT
SALES INC.
KOKOPELLI
KONA STAINED GLASS LTD.
LAURAY & FRIENDS KARAOKE
LEBLANC, WANDA
LIMETWIG HOMES LTD.
LITTLE COUNTRY CAPPUCCINO
LORN ANDERSON WELDING LTD.
LUTE'S ACCOUNTING

MACKLIN AGRO SERVICES LTD.
MAIN AVENUE COLD BEER & LIQUOR STORE
MANULIFE SECURITIES
MARFLEET OILFIELD & WELDING SUPPLIES
Bocher, 1995

MARIE'S HAIR HACIENDA
MARK CROUCH BACKHOE SERVICE LTD.
MARTYN'S BOBCAT & FENCING SERVICES,
JASON MARTYN
METRO ENGINEERING & CONTRACTING
LTD.
MIDFIELD SUPPLY LTD.
MOUNTAIN VIEW CLEANING SUPPLIES
MOUNTAIN VIEW CREDIT UNION LTD
MOUNTAIN VIEW PUBLISHING INC.
MOUNTAIN'S EDGE CYCLE & SLED LTD.,
T.C. WILSON
MOUNTAINVIEW SHEET METAL
MOVIE GALLERY
MR MOM'S
MURF'S OUTDOOR EQUIPMENT

NELSON, MARIE
NEXT TIME 'ROUND
NORSK YARD CARE

OTTER RAFTING ADV. INC.
OUT WEST TRUCK & CAR WASH
OUTLAWS GRILL & SWAMP DONKEYS PUB

P & L HARDWARE, LAURA KLASSEN
PAINT BY NUMBER 567 LTD., BRIAN AND
LESA KOPP
PAINT PERFECT, RON LAPOINTE
PANORAMA MECHANICAL LTD., SHARON
SOMMERFELD
PARKWOOD MOTOR INN, C/O PMI HOLDINGS LTD
PATRICIA CAMPKIN
PAUL'S BARBER SHOP
PEACHY SMITH INC.
PEAK PRINTING & PUBLISHING
PERRY APPRAISALS & ASSOC.
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOLENE
PIROS FAMILY RESTAURANT
PREMIER BOOKS DIRECT
PRICE 4 X 4 & AUTOMOTIVES
PRO WATER CONDITIONING
PRONGHORN CONTROLS LTD.
PUFF 'N FLUFF
PURETONE HEARING GRP, LINDA HILL

R & R HOMEBUILDING
R & V EXCAVATING LTD
R.P.M. AUTOMOTIVE (SUNDRE 1983) LTD
READ-IT BOOKS
REFILLS CLEANING SUPPLIES

RESONATA INC. O/A STETSON'S
RETRO-AIRE
ROCKY MOUNTAIN RENOVATIONS
ROCKY TOP SALOON
ROYAL SERVICES
ROY'S CUSTOM HOMES

S & S MASONRY
SALIX RESOURCE MANAGEMENT LTD.
SAVOURY MEATS AND SAUSAGE, VERN
GIESBRECHT
SCW FOUNDATIONS
SEW PERFECT FOR YOU
SHAW CABLESYSTEMS
SHOEBOX ACCOUNTING SOLUTIONS LTD.
SIDE-LINE DESIGN
SP'S NOVELTY ITEMS
STEVENSON DEVELOPMENT CORPORA-
TION
STEVE'S AUTOMOTIVE SERVICE
SUBWAY
SUN PLAZA MOTEL
SUNDRE BOLT SUPPLY
SUNDRE CONTAINER DEPOT
SUNDRE CONTRACTING CO.
SUNDRE DOLLAR STORE PLUS
SUNDRE FLOORING
SUNDRE FLOWER SHOPPE
SUNDRE FOREST PRODUCTS INC.
SUNDRE GLASS & MIRROR CO.
SUNDRE HOTEL
SUNDRE I.G.A.
SUNDRE LIQUOR HUT, 1277446 ALBERTA
LTD.
SUNDRE LIVESTOCK & FARM SUPPLIES
LTD.
SUNDRE LUBE
SUNDRE MEN'S WEAR
SUNDRE MOTOR INN, C/O 728387 ALBERTA
LTD.
SUNDRE MOTORS LIMITED
SUNDRE NEW & USED, MYRNA M
SUNDRE PHYSICAL THERAPY CLINIC
SUNDRE PHYSIOTHERAPY CLINIC
SUNDRE RENTALS LTD.
SUNDRE TAXI
SUNDRE VIDEO & PHOTO LTD.
SUNWEST CHIMNEY CLEANING

TAPERETTE HAIRSTUDIO
TAURUS TOWING, DEAN & CHERYL
MELCHER
THE ART HUT
THE MAIN MENU
THE SOURCE BY CIRCUIT CITY
THR TRUCKING LTD.
THREADSETTERS
TIMELESS INTERIORS
TIRECRAFT AUTO CENTRE
TRACEY BROSH PHOTOGRAPHY
TRACY HAYES CARPENTRY
TRADEX SUPPLY LTD
TRANQUILITY DAY SPA
TRENDIES RESTAURANT
TRENT HOLMES CONSTRUCTION LTD
TRIPLE R STEAMING & FENCING

ULTIMATE SAFETY ALBERTA, RENE
SCHOONDERBEEK

V & S OPTIONS
VALLEY JEWELLERS LTD.
VHQ
VINSPEC LTD.

WASTE SERVICES INC.
WEBB FINANCIAL
WEST COUNTRY SPORTS LTD.
WESTERN WORDSMITH GRAPHICS &
WESTSIDE BARBER
WILDROSE RESTAURANT
WINTERS WOOD WORKS
WISH UPON A STAR

YOUR EXECUTIVE SOLUTION LTD

ZIM'S MINI MART

T.G. MCLEAN DESIGN
TANAS CONCRETE
TANJENCE HAIR STUDIO

Some of Sundre's Current Community Services & Groups

Support Services

Nutrition for Learning Society
FCSS
Greenwood Neighbourhood Place
Sundre Palliative Care Association & Sundre
Grief Support Program
Mount View Foster Parents Association
Welcome Wagon
Burden Bearers
Sundre Al-Anon
Sundre AA
Visually Impaired Support Group
Sundre Search & Rescue
Sundre Community Health Centre
Disaster Services
Interagency Council
Mental Health Services
Family School Wellness Program
Sundre Community Learning Centre

Community Groups

Greenwood Country Voices
Sundre Farmers Market
Sundre & District Chamber of Commerce
Foothills Lodge Auxiliary Association
Peak Theatre Players
Lions Club
Royal Canadian Legion
Royal Purple
Agricultural Society
Allied Arts Society

Sundre & District Art Society
Community TV Society
Sundre & District Curling Society
Sundre Fish & Game Club
Sundre Flying Club
Sundre Fly Anglers
Sundre Garden Club
Sundre & District Historical Society
Sundre 4-H Multi Club
Junior Forest Wardens
Sundre Junior Curling
BPO Elks
Sundre Minor Soccer
Northwest Basketball Camp
Sundre Minor Hockey
Sundre Minor Ball Association
Sundre Band Society
Sundre Skating Club
Sundre Community Dance
Sundre Adult Badminton
Mountain View Tae Kwon Do Club
Sundre Rodeo & Race Association
Sundre Swim Club
Sundre & District Aquatic Society
Sundre West Country Centre
TOPS
Sundre Hospital Auxiliary
Sundre Play School
Sundre Municipal Library

Sundre Statistics

The Population of Sundre

2008	2,518
2006*	2,267
2005*	2,267
2004*	2,267
2003*	2,267
2002*	2,267
2001**	2,265
1996**	2,028
1991**	1,834

* Source: Official Population List, Alberta Municipal Affairs

** Source: Statistics Canada Census

Population by Age 1996 and 2001

	1996	2001
Age 0 - 4	140	145
Age 5 - 14	315	310
Age 15 - 19	150	150
Age 20 - 24	120	120
Age 25 - 34	265	285
Age 35 - 44	320	375
Age 45 - 54	235	240
Age 55 - 64	165	250
Age 65 - 74	155	190
Age 75 and older	155	225
Total All Persons	2,030	2,265

Source: Statistics Canada 1996 & 2001 Census
(numbers may not add up due to rounding)

Sundre Labour Force By Industry - 2001

Community Service	34.3%
Construction	15.5%
Manufacturing	15%
Retail and Wholesale	12.6%
Agriculture	7.2%
Mining	5.8%

Transportation and Utilities	5.3%
Public Administration	2.9%
Finance	1.9%

Source: Statistics Canada 1996 & 2001 Census
(numbers may not add up due to rounding)

Household Income (Number of Households)

	1996	2001
Less than \$19,999	195	220
\$20,000 - \$39,999	270	255
\$40,000 - \$59,999	150	180
\$60,000 and over	80	285
Total number of households	800	940
Average household income	40,487	46,045
Median household income	34,594	39,677

Source: Statistics Canada 1996 & 2001 Census
(numbers may not add up due to rounding)

Highest Level of Schooling for Population 20yrs and Older 2001

People without high school certificates	615	(38.08%)
People with high school certificates	190	(11.76%)
People with trades or non-university certificate or diploma	505	(31.27%)
People with post-secondary education (not completed)	155	(9.60%)
People with university diploma/certificate	10	(0.62%)

Looking to the Future

*For I dip't into the future
Far as the human eye could see,
Saw the vision of the world
And all the wonder that could be.*
-Alfred, Lord Tennyson, from the poem "Locksley Hall"

We tend to think of the years gone by as something wrapped up in a neat package labelled "PAST", stashed away amongst the cobwebs in the attic with grandma's old photo albums. But the past is not just the history of people and places that existed a long time ago. Every day that we live we are helping create the past just as surely as we are helping create the future.

A hundred years from now it is very possible that somebody will be writing the history of the people who are making a difference in our community *today*, and the story of Sundre, "The Little Town That Could", will continue.

Sundre is a much different place today than it was a hundred years ago when N.T. Hagen first nailed a post office sign above the door of his store. In 2109 it will be as different again. All the buildings, amenities, and possessions which amaze us with their technological wonders today, will eventually, like the inventions of yesteryear, grace local museums; sit in cobwebby attics: or turn to dust. Nothing is permanent. Nothing stays the same.

In 1909, only a scattering of people called Sundre home. Today we have a population that is inching its way towards the three thousand mark. In 1909 it sometimes took a day or more to travel to Olds; today we drive to Olds in less than half an hour. A hundred years ago it took months to journey coast to coast across Canada via team and wagon; today we can make that same trip by air in a matter of hours.

It is amazing to look back and realize how far we have come in such a relatively short period of time.

Alfred, Lord Tennyson, writing the poem, "Locksley Hall" in the 1830's envisioned a future where "the heavens fill with commerce, argosies of magic sails". As it turned out, his prophecy was pretty accurate, but like the predictions we might make about our own future today, it was, at best, an educated guess.

Over the last few years, Sundre has been going through a period of rapid growth and change and in many ways this has taken residents by surprise. For so many of its early years, the community was seen by outsiders as a sleepy little place, too far out in the bush to be of much significance. Today, Sundre rates high on the "desirable small Alberta towns" list, especially for those looking to move out of the hustle and bustle of Calgary.

Between 2001 and 2005 the number of new housing starts in Sundre almost tripled, mirroring, perhaps, the increased affluence many provincial residents are experiencing due to the present oil and gas boom and also the increase to Sundre's population of more than 20% between 1996 and 2006.

At the end of 2007, development appears to have levelled off somewhat, but anyone driving or walking in the downtown area at almost anytime of day will agree that Sundre is about as far as it can get from its sleepy small town image of earlier years.

During the 1950's oil boom, it was lack of temporary accommodation, unavailability of developable land and overcrowding in the schools that were creating some of the biggest headaches for Town Council. Today, the issues are a little different: Water treatment facilities are becoming obsolete; the Town Shop and some of the community's recreational venues are aging or inadequate; the Town Office itself is facing a need for more space and town staff are busier than they have ever been.

Town Council and Administration are extremely busy with the process of planning for Sundre's future growth: Provision for the annexation of a considerable amount of land has already taken place following a recent agreement with Mountain View County; improvements to the east side of Sundre are high on the agenda, as is the beautification of Sundre's downtown core. Improvements have al-

ready taken place in southwest Sundre with new road surfacing, curb and gutter, sidewalks and additional streetlights; a recent addition to the Fire Hall has resulted in a modern command centre which facilitates both fire and ambulance services; the new Sundre Community Centre has been up and running since 2006, providing residents with enhanced services and organizations with greatly expanded space.

Several other major improvements and developments are also being planned and implemented with Council's blessing: For the first time, Sundre has traffic lights, based on a decision made recently by the Alberta Government following traffic studies on Main Avenue/Highway 27; plans for a new hospital within the next few years are in the works and a new commercial/residential/recreational development is planned for west Sundre; the Agricultural Society is hoping to build an indoor arena at the Rodeo Grounds and several multi-family dwellings are in various stages of construction.

In these modern times, planning for sustainable future development is a priority for all communities, and Sundre is certainly very involved in this process. But no one can predict the future with absolute accuracy: A hundred years ago, the community of Derbysburg looked forward to a continuation of its growth and its role as the hub of the local area. It could not have foreseen that a series of devastating floods and the sale of David McDougall's area holdings would change its destiny forever and pretty well remove it from the map.

Sundre today is far less vulnerable than Derbysburg was in the early part of the twentieth century, but the possible implications of climate change, the long term future of the oil and gas industry, and the fluctuations of the world political scene and economy can all make a difference to the fortunes of the large and small towns that have grown up as a result of Alberta's early pioneer development. On a more local level, Sundre retailers are facing challenges presented by the addition of "big box" stores in neighbouring Olds. In the long term, having large retailers within easy driving distance may attract more new residents to our community, but in the meantime Sundre may face a period of readjustment.

Twenty or thirty years from now, Sundre could have a population of ten thousand, or it could be not too much changed from what it is today. Either way, it will continue to be a positive community with a big heart and a strong will, for this is a town that has proved many times over that it is not willing to accept less than what it believes it deserves: When the townspeople wanted a curling rink back in the late forties and early fifties, it wasn't handed to them on a plate, they worked hard to raise the money and then they worked hard again, volunteering time and labour to building the facility, and the people of Sundre continue to work hard today to see that the second curling rink remains viable; when the hospital project began to look as though it would never happen, it was the people of our community who fought back, and fought back hard, to win the day; when the community wanted an arena, back in the late sixties and early seventies, they ignored all the nay-sayers and went ahead and raised the money and built it anyway. The same is true of the volunteers who worked so diligently to have an arts centre built in the nineties - they believed in their dream and they made it happen; and no one worked harder than those who wanted to see a swimming pool built in Sundre, which, despite the years of challenge and struggle that preceded its completion, resulted in a beautiful aqua-plex that we all can feel very proud of. And yet, in almost all these scenarios, those forward looking individuals who sought to bring these facilities to the community, were told, no, the town is too small/can't afford it/will never make use of it/won't be able to maintain it - and this only served to make the people involved more determined. Anyone who has lived in Sundre for a while understands that saying "no" to the people of this community is like waving a red flag at a bull! Just as Sundre people fought to have a hospital here, they fought equally hard to keep it open when it was under serious threat of closure. When residential development of Snake Hill looked like a possibility, the townspeople of Sundre, including its children, spoke out almost as one voice to "Save the Snake".

Sundre people have always been innovative, caring and very, very determined. Few towns can match this community for its sheer force of will in times of adversity and change, and this is not likely to be any different in the future. The older generation, and the one before it, shaped, nurtured and grew our town, and fought for it when necessary; there is little doubt that the newer generations will continue to do this, while planning for, and guiding the community into, the future. After all, they have had excellent role models.

It has been many years since those first early settlers perhaps stood on the brow of the Sundre Hill and looked in awe over the wild and fertile valley below. They came looking for land and a future and they found both, and in so doing they paved the way for all of us who would follow. Those same pioneers would barely recognise the area today, but they would be proud to see that the many hardships they endured in pursuit of their dreams have resulted in a thriving, growing community on the banks of the Red Deer River – a community with a rich and courageous past and all the signs of a prosperous and secure future.

Glamorous Sundre

There's an air of the old west lingers still
Though the highway ribbon cuts valley and hill,
There's spaciousness to the river's curve -
A wide blue arch to the sky,
A hand flung high in friendship's sign
That belongs to days gone by.
There's a luring call to the winding trails
That circle the hills to the hidden vales;
Blue haze lies wreathed on the farther hills;
Deep in a Spruce grove, and half concealed –
A log house, weathered to tan and gray,
Sets in the edge of a rolling field.
There's a wanderlust song in the little streams
Tumbling out of the foothills dreams;
The white rampart of mountains eternal guard,
Dark spruce and poplar storm the rugged hill,
There's a feeling of newness and far country,
And an air of the old west lingering still.

- W.H.

**Note: In 1981, this poem was discovered amongst Sundre Round-Up archives. The newspaper published it on July 14, 1960. W.H. was the only identification provided but it seems very likely that the author was William Hinson, a man who wrote several poems about the Sundre area and who also was a regular contributor to the Sundre Round-up in the early years of its publication. He had a column called "In and Out of Sundre". It is heartening to find that the words of his poem still ring true for the thriving Sundre community we know today.*

Some of Sundre's Oldest Buildings



Zim's Mini Mart & Former 1947 Creamery



Outlaws Grill - Former 1929/1930 (approx) Jeannot Building



Sundre Glass & Mirror - Former 1941 Vooy's Garage



Former Women's Institute Hall Built 1924



The Old Vennard Store Built 1947 Beside the New Bearberry Court Condo Building



Sundre Livestock & Farm Supply - Former Sundre Feedmill Built 1948



Sundre United Church Built 1945



Sundre Hotel Built 1955



Sundre Motors Built 1941

Sundre's Modern Buildings



Vintage Square



Corner Brook



Foothills Terrace - Sundre's First Condominium Complex



Mountain View Credit Union



Cosmos Dining Lounge & Sports Bar



Sobeys



Prairie Creek Shopping Centre



**Main Avenue Mall
Sundre**

Other Sundre Buildings and Facilities



Sundre Motors Showroom



Foothills Senior's Lodge



Sundre Golf Course



Sundre Community Centre



The Chester Mjolsness World of Wildlife Exhibit



Town of Sundre Offices, Fire Hall & Ambulance Services 2008

Sundre Events



Rodeo Action



Sundre Rodeo Parade. Photo Courtesy of Sundre Chamber of Commerce website



Red Deer River Festival



Show & Shine Car Show



Canada Day at the Pioneer Village Museum



Winter Carnival



All the Fun of the Fair



Winter Sports

Our Economy - Sundre's Big Four



AGRICULTURE



OIL & GAS

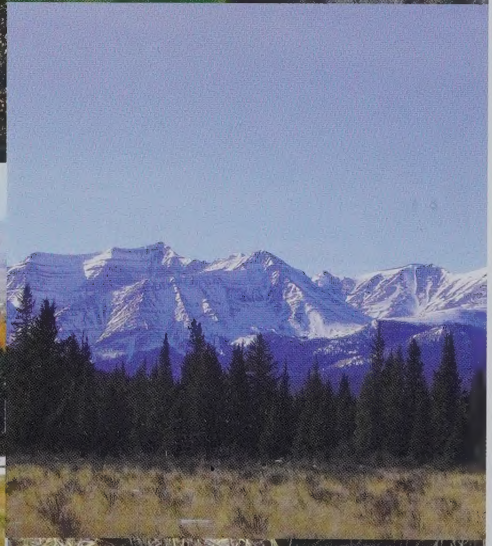


FORESTRY



TOURISM

Around Sundre



The Technology of a Bygone Era



Some of the Artifacts at the Sundre Museum which were used by Area Pioneers

Clockwise from top left:
Candle Powered Slide Projector;
Blow Torch; 1926 Kodak Camera;
Oil-Fired Parlour Lamp: 1916
Phonograph (donated to Sundre
Museum by C.Segers); Washing
Machine (donated to Sundre
Museum by Hadley Fowler); 1914
Intertype Type Setter (donated to
Sundre Museum by Contempo-
rary Graphics); Cash Register.



“To look backward for a while is to refresh the eye, to restore it, and to render it the more fit for its prime function of looking forward.” ~Margaret Fairless Barber, *The Roadmender*



Sundre Area Cowboys: Left to Right - Charlie Berry; Frank Siegfried; Don McMurty; Frank Joachim; Cuf Jamieson; Tom Vinson ;Reg Woodstock; Albert Morris



Joe Heaton; Nate Ellithorpe; Fred Jeannot; Lawrence Ferguson



**Preparing the Site of the Outdoor Skating Rink
Near the Sundre Creamery in About 1940**



The Historic Flood of 1915 Looking West Across the Red Deer River, The Hagen Store is Just Left of Centre on the Ridge. The Remains of the Sundre Bridge are Just Right of Centre



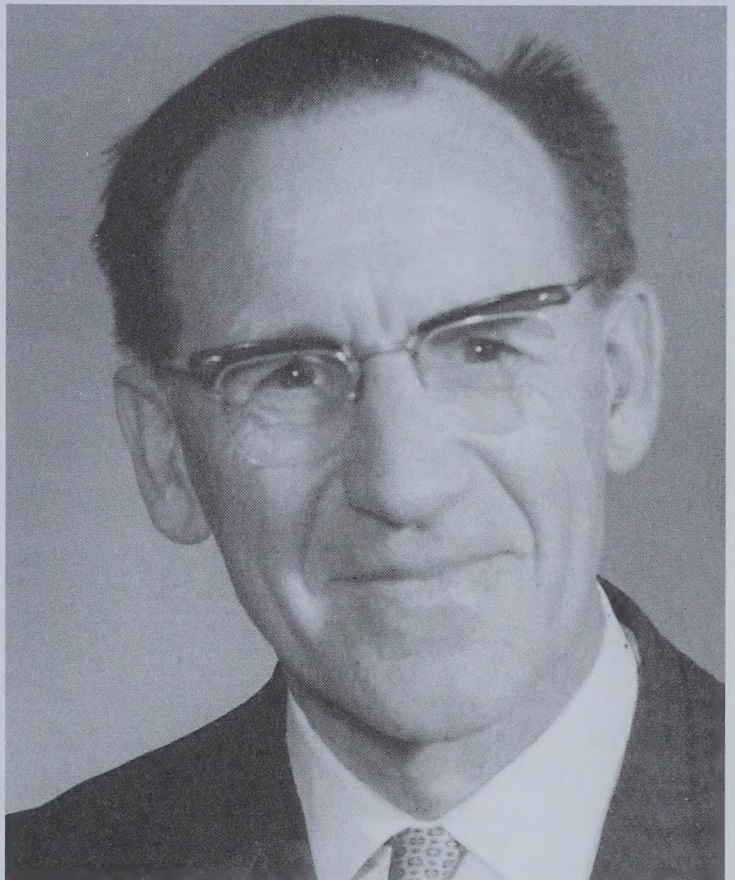
Rose, Margaret, Grace & Ernie Ellithorpe in Front of Ellithorpe General Store



Early Area Midwife Mrs. Syvr Johnson



Early Garbage Collection Truck



Sundre's First School Principal John Weir in
Later Years



Fred & Pearl Jeannot



Sundre Transport When Operated by Ernie
Pearce



Ed Halvorson, Sundre's 1st Fire Chief



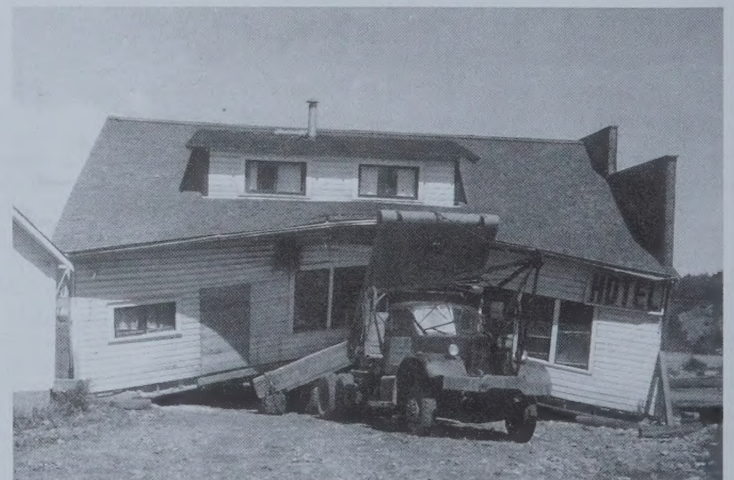
**Eagle Point School Being Moved Into Sundre
About 1942**



An Early School Bus



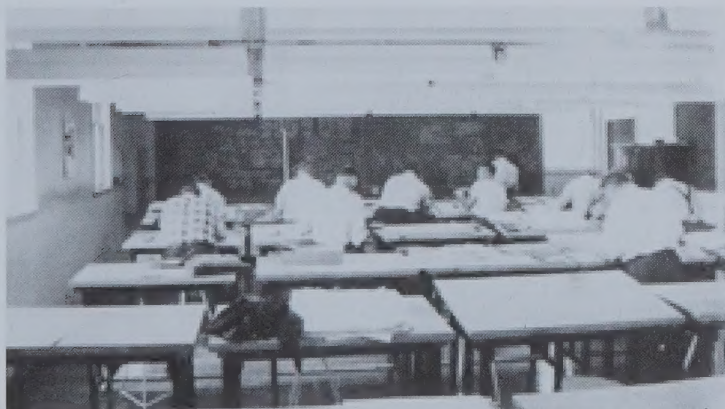
Mrs. Elizabeth Hagen



**The Original Sundre Hotel Being Moved to
Make Room for the New Hotel 1950s**



Eskesen Bros. Mill



Sundre School Students in the United Church Basement



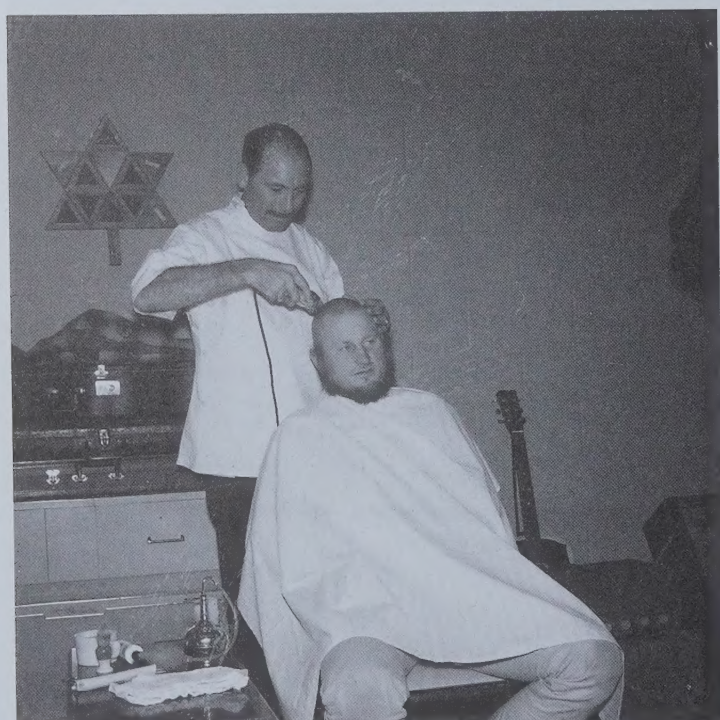
Lt. Matthew W. MacKenzie (R), Commanding Officer of Sundre Sea Cadets, Accepts a Sword from Legion President Chris Marfleet (L)



Mr. & Mrs. Joe Heaton



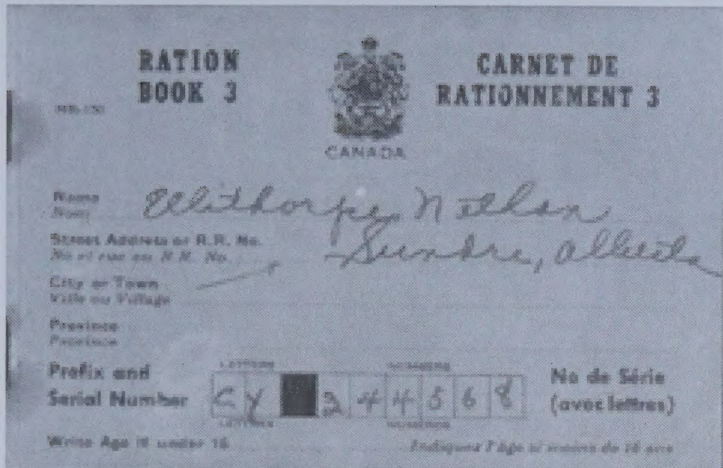
Roy Toone - Long Time Owner of Sundre Sales & Service



Sundre Barber, Tony Hoovers Cuts the Hair of Jack Tyler Who Has Grown His Hair Long on a Bet



Len Rushka - 2nd Owner of the Sundre Round Up



Ration Book Belonging to Nate Ellithorpe



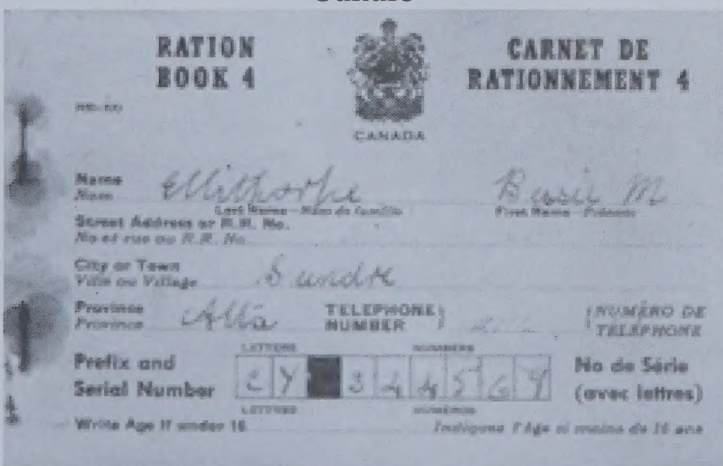
Mr. & Mrs. Joe Heaton With Daughter, Bessie Ellithorpe, and Her Children, Lynn & Roy



Nate Ellithorpe Grading Road Between Olds & Sundre



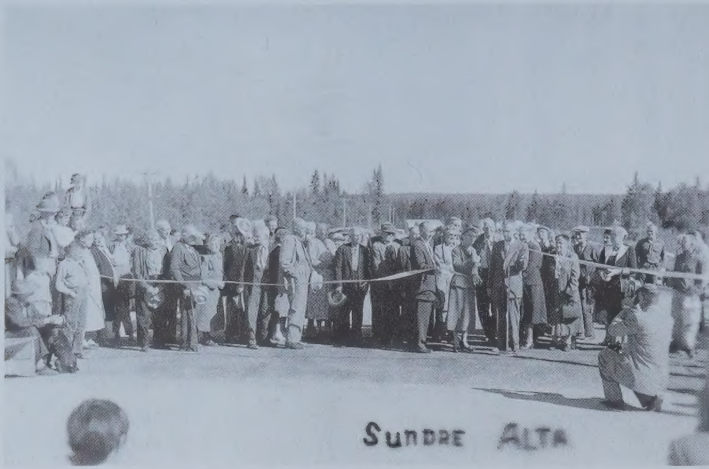
Tom Mennear, Owner of the Sobeys Store Today, at the Beginning of a Long Tradition of Putting on the Pancake Breakfast on Rodeo Weekend



Ration Book Belonging to Bessie Ellithorpe



Sundre Downtown Shopping Centre Opened in 1961



The Opening of the Concrete Span Sundre Bridge
Sept. 2, 1959



Neil Vanderzwan & Reg Morris Shake Hands Before
a Swim Race at Swimming Pool Opening in May
1967.



The Old and New Bridges Side by Side in 1959

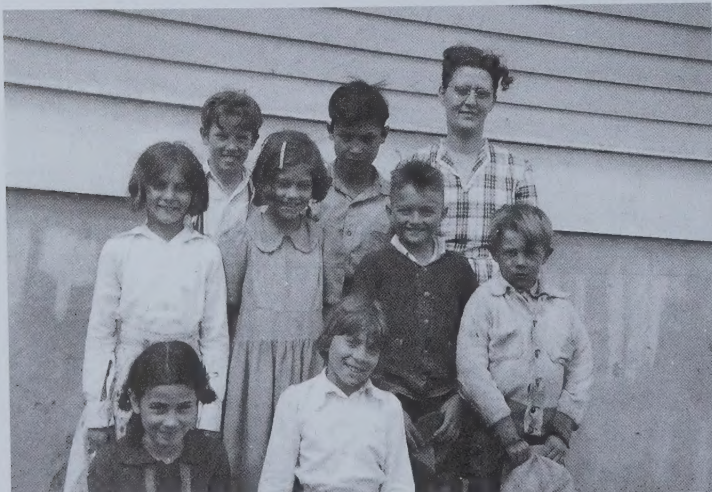


Clearing Land for the Outdoor Swimming Pool Park
About 1967.

School Days 1942-1946



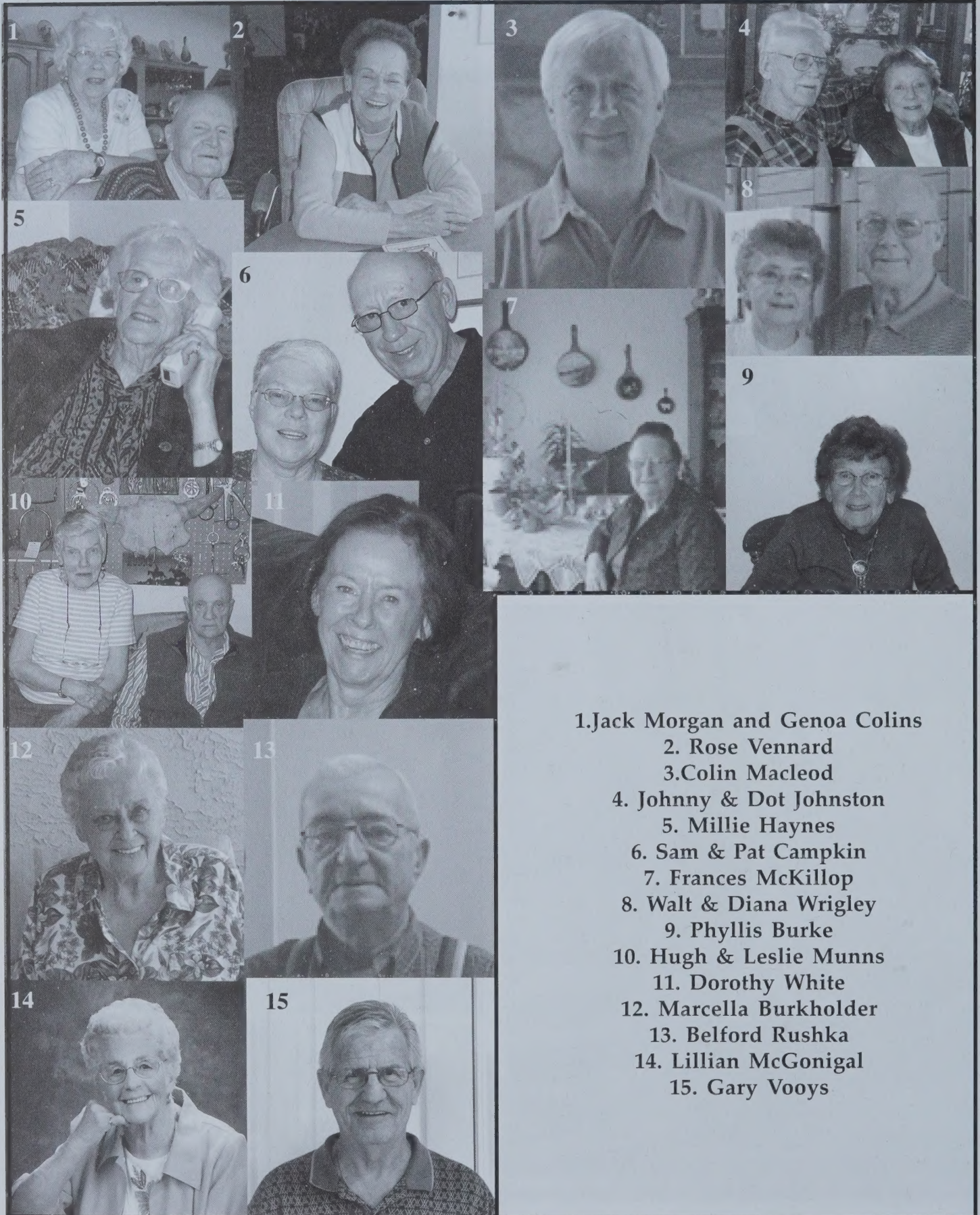






All photos page 283-293 are courtesy
of the Sundre Museum

Some of the Major Contributors to “The Little Town That Could”



1. Jack Morgan and Genoa Colins
2. Rose Vennard
3. Colin Macleod
4. Johnny & Dot Johnston
5. Millie Haynes
6. Sam & Pat Campkin
7. Frances McKillop
8. Walt & Diana Wrigley
9. Phyllis Burke
10. Hugh & Leslie Munns
11. Dorothy White
12. Marcella Burkholder
13. Belford Rushka
14. Lillian McGonigal
15. Gary Voos

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Meg Irving 2007

Index:

- "A Journey in Faith" 109
- "A Tribute to a Man of God" 109
- "Arsenic & Old Lace" 71,143
- "Glamorous Sundre" 274
- "Haze Over Blue Hill" 15
- "In Flanders Fields" 63
- "Locksley Hall" 272
- "Our Pioneers" 28
- "Rainbows at Dusk" 33
- "The Macleod Story" 82
- "The Roadmender" 283
- "The Russ Greenwood Story" 113
- "The Starfish" 104
- "The Storm" 234
- "The Ugly Duckling" 234
- "When the Cattle Died" 33
- 19 Mile Ranch 112
- 4H Pledge 180
- A&W 76,
- Aa Ba He Tinda - Kinnickinnic Flats 255
- Aberhart, William 60,80
- Adams, Faye 131
- Adams, Lavar 160
- Addington 8
- Adler, Alma 23
- Adler, Natalie 23
- Agri-Sul Canada 156
- Aisanstat, Benjamin 52
- Ajax Agencies 83,203
- Alberta Association of Agricultural Societies Project of the Year Award 248
- Alberta Energy & Utilities Board (EUB) 243,244
- Alberta Gas Trunk Line 155,186,187,258
- Alberta Government Telephones (AGT) 147,148,168, 184
- Alberta Hospital Auxiliary Association 201
- Alberta Lottery/Alberta Government Community Facility Enhancement Program 241
- Alberta Treasury Branch 241
- Alberta Veterinary Medicine Association (AVMA) 226
- Alberta's 75th Anniversary 140
- Allen, Betty 258
- Allison, A.H. 92
- Alta Gas 156
- Alta-West Realty 247
- Alter Society 188
- Ancell, Sam 19
- Anderson, Daphne 109
- Anderson, Hog 78
- Anderson, J. 63
- Anderson, Joseph M. 22,27
- Anderson, Nels Martin 27
- Anderson, Ole 27
- Anderson, Terry 109,145
- Anglican Church 140,217
- Archer, Helen 99
- Arena Committee 218
- Armitage, Dr. Don 225
- Armstrong, Doreen 66
- Armstrong, Jim 127
- Arneson, Norman 19
- Arnew, Henry 18
- Artificial Ice 189,220,221
- Art's Hiding Place 160
- Aryan Nations Group 261
- Atlas Lumber Co. 36
- Auger, Phyllis 201
- B.A. Oil Station 186
- Baby Boomers 233,246
- Bach, Dan 199,200
- Bagnall 203
- Bailey, Brian 234
- Bailey, Colleen 234
- Bainbridge, Laura Louise 20
- Bainton, Fred 159
- Ballard, Dorothy 17
- Ballard, Harold 17
- Ballard, Herbert George (Bert) 17
- Ballard, Mary 17
- Bank of Montreal 52,144,220,260
- Banta, Anne 43
- Bar 7S Ranch 78,91
- Barbed Wire Line 87
- Bardgett, Joe 73
- Barry, Bert 132
- Bartholow, Anne 96
- Bartholow, Jim 243
- Bartholow, Lester 119
- Bartholow, Nita 174,175
- Bassett, Slim 27
- Bates, Catherine 10
- Bates, Walter 10,26
- Bates, William 10
- Battensby, Daisy 19
- Battensby, William 27,50
- Batthany, Ivan (Count) 29
- Batthany, Margit (Countess) 29
- Baustard, Jack 119
- Bayrak, Roy 150
- Bear, Joan 41
- Bearberry 9,10,15,19,20,21,22,25,26,44,51,53,88,150, 154,184
- Bearberry Court Condo 275
- Bearberry Creek 17,31,34 47,68,120,122, 170,172,196, 198,231,232,246,250,252,253,254
- Bearberry Creek Bridge 77,252,254
- Bearberry Post Office 50,51
- Bearberry School 17
- Bearberry Valley 15,17,22,26,87,224
- Bearspaw 255
- Beauchamp, Henry 132
- Beauchamp, Ted 132
- Beaver Pack 259

Beaverhill Lake Formation 157
 Belt, Dale 233
 Bengston, Stan 29
 Benner, Alberta 53
 Bennett, Bob 260
 Bennett, Leona 247,249
 Bennett, Oscar 218
 Benz, Phyllis 96
 Bergen 13,15,20,51,53,76,184,214
 Bergen Post Office 50,51
 Bergen School 15,20,44,45,214
 Berling, Albert 11,26
 Berling, Baldur 11,26
 Berling, Billy 11,26
 Berling, Elsie 11,26
 Berling, Jean 11,26
 Berling, Jim 11,26
 Berling, Nell 11,26
 Berling, Ronald 11,26
 Berling, Violet 11,26
 Berling, Wilma 11,26
 Berry, Charlie 283
 Big Horn Electric 240
 Bigalow, Ernest 45
 Bigalow, Mr. 79
 Bigalow, Richard 45
 Bigalow, Sid 45
 Bigelow, Leslie 45
 Bignold, Myron 249
 Bigstoney, Paul 3
 Billy the Kid the goat 126
 Bird 27
 Bird, Ernest 108
 Bird, Flora 70
 Bird, Howard 44
 Bird, R.F. 92
 Birney, Roland 45
 Bishop, Con Walter 18
 Bishop, Hazel 17
 Bishop, Ivy 17
 Bishop, Jenny 17
 Bishop, Lawrence 18
 Bishop, Luther 17
 Bishop, Reginald 17
 Bishop, Virginia 18
 Bishop, Henry 18
 Bjorkman, Vic 12
 Blackburn, Jenny 64
 Blackfoot Confederacy 3
 Blackfoot Nation 256
 Blaze 66,97
 Bliss, Dorothy Mae 108
 Bliss, Mrs. Roy 147
 Bliss, Vera 66
 Bloxham, Charles Byron 16,69
 Bloxham, Daniel 16
 Bloxham, Dudley 16
 Bloxham, Madge 16
 Bloxham, Minerva 16
 Bloxham, Roy 16
 Bloxham, Willis 16
 Blue Hill, 15,35,56
 Blunt, Nellie 71
 Bolander, Addison (Cook) 25
 Bolander, Harry 25
 Bolander, Henry (Hank) 25
 Bolander, Hiawatha 25
 Bolander, Oliver (Mose) 25
 Bolander, William (Bill) 25
 Bookless, Ralph 53,186
 Bootlegging 69
 Botham, Allan 24
 Botham, Anne 178
 Botham, Annie 18
 Botham, Bert 24,72
 Botham, Blanche 24
 Botham, Doris 24
 Botham, Frank 24
 Botham, G.R 24
 Botham, Goerge 24
 Botham, Major 24
 Botham, Maude 10,24
 Bottle Depot 179
 Bow River Forest 57
 Bow-Crow Forest 56,57
 Bowen, Henry 234,260
 Bowhay, Dennis 241,243
 Bowhay, Gordon 235,236
 Bowman, Colonel E. 117,129
 Bowman, Cornelius 24
 Bowman, Eric 24
 Bowman, Gladys 213
 Bowman, Laurence 24
 Bowman, Peter 24
 Bowman, Ray 132
 Boychuck, Dwight 164
 Braconnier 146
 Bradley, Agnes 131,
 Bradley, Gordon 88
 Bradley, Jason 30
 Bradley, Marci 30
 Bradley, Stella 131
 Brady, John 75
 Bramley, Barbara 77
 Bramley, Clara 70,77,130,134
 Bramley, George 77
 Bramley, Hazel 77
 Bramley, Joe 77
 Bramley, Josie 77,129
 Braunberger, Arnold 45
 Braunberger, Gladys 45
 Braunberger, Norman 45
 Braunberger, Willard 45
 Bredin, Ron 103,104

Bredin's Welding Shop 142
 Bressler, James H. 213
 Bressler, Mary 209
 Brightman, Evelyn 165
 Brisbin & Gates 231
 Broadbent, Len 27
 Brooks, Ike 6,68,72
 Brooks, Mary 68
 Brooks, Rueben 6,68
 Brose, Bill & Judy 130
 Brown, Daryl 101
 Brown, Dick 29,72
 Brown, J. 27
 Bryan, Shorty 21
 Buchan & Willumsen 59
 Buchanan, Bruce 40,238,239
 Buckley, Judy 165
 Buffalo Bill, 16,69
 Bullard, Laurie 62
 Burger Baron 102
 Burger Baron 65
 Burke, Bronte 90
 Burke, Corliss 90
 Burke, Dave 65,68,71,73,77,88,90,91,166,167 196, 204, 232,259
 Burke, Fred 77,88,89,90,128,129
 Burke, Leslie 90
 Burke, Mabel 89,129
 Burke, Morton 90
 Burke, Paul, 90
 Burke, Phyllis 55,65,70,77,81,90,130,196,259,294
 Burke's Hardware 76,89,90,91,144,148,181
 Burke's Lumber 65,89,238
 Burkholder, Don 151,178,205
 Burkholder, Marcella 151,174,178,194,199,205,210, 235, 294
 Burkholder, Wayne 260
 Burns-Lukas, Karen 249
 Burnstick Lake 10,19
 Burrell, Edith 127
 Burrell, Mr. 127
 Burrell, Stan 145,195
 Bush, US President George W. 211
 Butchers Hill 9,30
 Cabel, Bill 119
 Calgary 88 Olympics 240
 Calgary Brewery 127
 Calgary Curling Club 221
 Calgary Foundation 249
 Calgary Power 103,106,121,141,145,153,168,170,173, 258
 Calgary Stampede 8,73,74,125,126,127,128
 Calgary Stampede Board 127,128
 Calgary Stampede Grounds 128,218
 Calgary Stampede Parade 128
 Calgary-Edmonton Railway 4,14
 Campbell 26
 Campbell Woodall 248
 Campkin, Patricia 171,205,206,207,236,294
 Campkin, Paula 171
 Campkin, Robert William & Angelina Sophia 171
 Campkin, Russell 171
 Campkin, Sam 146,171,206,211, 216,218,219,261,294
 Canadian Alliance Party 211
 Canadian Armed Forces 110
 Canadian Charter of Rights 211
 Canadian Flag (Maple Leaf) 194,195
 Canadian Flag (Red Ensign) 195
 Canadian Nazarene College 118
 Canadian Pacific Railway 4,20,26,49,185
 Canadian Reform Conservative Alliance 60
 Canadian Veterinary Medicine Assoc. (CVMA) 226
 Canadian Superior 155
 Candy Stripers 201
 Canterra (Husky) 157
 Cardon, Bert 214
 Carlson, Albin
 Carlson, Alice 96
 Carlson, Edris 66,96
 Carlson, Mrs. 70
 Carmen Phillips Trucking 132
 Caroline Complex 243
 Caroline Gas Field 138,139,140,156,157,171,261
 Caroline Livestock Study 158,244
 Caroline Well #23 157
 Carter 58
 Cartier Creek 195
 Cartledge, George & Emily 77
 Cascade Drilling 182
 Casey, Ted 89
 Catholic Women's League 140,187,188
 Caveny, Bert 103,145,153,170,222
 Caveny, Howard & Pearl 170
 Caveny, Margaret 170
 Celebrity Golf Tournament 247,248
 Centennial Outdoor Swimming Pool 169,189,213,246, 258,290
 Central Creameries 63
 Century 21 Alta West Realty 229,231,258
 Certificate of Incorporation 166
 Chamber of Commerce Hospital Committee 185, 189, 198,205
 Chantler, Elizabeth 30
 Chapelhow, Dick 117
 Chapman, Fred 107
 Chase, A.P. 52
 Cheladyn, W.J. 150
 Chester Mjolsness World of Wildlife Museum 215,278
 Chiniki 255
 Chinook's Edge School Board 140
 Chinook's Edge School Division 99
 Choisser, Betty 86
 Chrest, D 199
 Chrest, Larry 53

Christensen, Carl 75,132
 Christenson, John 27
 Christenson, Mrs. S 70
 Christiansen, Hanne 151
 Christopher Family 150
 Christopher, Randy 132,142
 Church of the Nazarene 71,103,104,118,119,182,191, 193,257
 Church of the Nazarene Board 119
 Church, Art 27
 Church, Charlie 16
 Cipperly, Mel 145
 CKRD 187,232
 Clark, Allan 40
 Clark, Bob M.L.A. 121,170,181,190,198,204,205,213,231, 232
 Clark, D. 204
 Clark, Linus 40,238
 Clark, Ollie 128
 Clark, Sulveig 106
 Clark, Tom 40,238
 Clark, Const. Tom 241
 Claussen, Laura 85
 Claussen, Pete 85
 Clay, Helen 131
 Clayton, Annie Curtis 15,97
 Clews, Annette 175,177
 Clover Valley Milk 144
 Coal Camp 2,5,9,11,22,27,31,36,40,48,71,80,112,123, 154, 232
 Coarse Grains Marketing Act 124
 Cody, William 16
 Coleman 7,8
 Colins, Genoa 59,294
 Columbus, Christopher AKA Lum Sheets 131
 Communities in Bloom 246
 Community Health Nurse 229,230
 Community Television 260
 Conchuck 45
 Conchuck, Dorothy 45
 Confederation of Canada 246
 Conservative Party of Canada 211
 Constitution Act of 1982 102
 Cook, Don 78,132,199
 Cook, Minnie 51,213,214
 Cook, Norman MLA 119
 Co-op Creamery 51,63
 Cooper, Russell 96
 Cooper, Sharon 241
 Copithorne, George 57
 Coreless, Doreen 45,96
 Corless, Ed 68,72,131
 Corless, Grace 131
 Corless, Mrs. Ed 131
 Corless, Melvin 72
 Corless, Roy 66
 Corley, Dr. James 193,206,207,236,237
 Corner Brook 276
 Corner Service 95,144,197
 Corral Café 76,177,178,179,264
 Cosgrave, Dick 127
 Cosmos Dining Lounge 181,184,277
 Cottrell, Ron 249
 Cougar Clothing 171
 County of Mountain View 23,97,98,103,131,145,172, 186,198,203,205,210,218,220,221
 County School Board 174,210
 Coutts, Lorraine 67,68,168,183
 Cow/Calf Program 247,248
 Cox, Dr. Peter 193
 Coyote Creek Golf & RV Resort 200
 Craig, Betty 12,25
 Craig, John 25
 Craig, Ruby 25
 Craig, Steve 12,25
 Crammond 8,19,52
 Crammond Store 19
 Crawford, Mr. 159,166
 Credit Union 79,277
 Cree Nation 256
 Creelman, Ross 40,238
 Cremona Pipeline Company 155
 Cub Scouts 1st Jackson Pack 257
 Cummings, Roy & Yvonne 173
 Cummings, Roy 173,175,177
 Cummings, Sandy (Roy) 173
 Cummings, Sandy 27
 Cummings, Terry 173
 Cummings, Traci 173
 Cummings, Trevor, 173
 Cummins, Norm 53
 Cunningham, Bob 27
 Curling Club 71,123,143,167,185,217,240,241
 Curling Rink (1st) 69,98,140,143,180,189,241,246,257
 Curling Rink (2nd) 140,146,147,216,240,241,248
 Currie, Alex 22
 CX Hereford Ranch 8
 Dames, Frank 14
 Dames, Harold 14
 Dames, James W. 14,63
 Dames, Mrs. James W. 14
 Dar-Car Trucking Ltd. 132
 Darling, Burke 18
 Darling, Ivan 18
 Daudey, Marianne 224
 David Thompson Health Region 208,230
 Davidchuck, Steve 216,218,219
 Davidson, Bill 89
 Davidson, Clara 77
 Davidson, Dave 94
 Davidson, Isabella 75
 Davidson, John James 75
 Davidson, Leslie 76
 Davidson, Margaret 55,70,76,77,89,131,177
 Davidson, Phyllis 42,45,76,89,91,96,135

Davidson, Walter 55,70,76,77,81,89,105,177
 Day, Florence 16
 Davis, G. 27
 Davis, Mrs. Harvey 222
 Day, Martha 16
 Day, Mary 16
 Day, Stockwell 211
 Dead-stick Dick 71,72
 Dean Corner 77
 Dean, Alfred 12
 Dean, Bessie 13
 Dean, Esther 13
 Dean, James 13
 Dean, Lyla 178
 Dean, Nancy 13
 Dean, Robert 13
 Dean, Spenser 13
 Dean, Stan 12, 13,44
 Dean, Thomas 12
 Dental Clinic 259
 Derbytoun 2,5,8,9,10,11,12,20,22,23,28,31,47,48,49, 50,
 51,63,69,196,231,273
 Derbytoun Ball Team 10
 Derbytoun Bridge 8,38,63,66
 Derbytoun Creamery 20
 Derbytoun Eye Opener 11,66
 Derbytoun Store 14
 Derbytoun W.I. 70
 Dibble, Charlie 214
 Dibble, Neil 235
 Dichrow, Joanna 249
 Dick, Irvin 71
 Dick, Mr. 159
 Dickman, Al 101
 Dickman, Cathy 101
 Dickman, Jean 101,259
 Dickman, Jerry 101
 Dickman, Liz 101
 Dickson Dam 140,198,253
 Diefenbaker, John P.M. 169
 Dinnsen, Henry 123
 Director of Pharmacy 185
 Dirty Thirties 80,81,85
 Disaster Services 253
 District Nurses Act 229
 Dix, Bud 14
 Dix, Donald 14
 Dix, Harold 14
 Dix, Malcome (Mac) 14
 Dobbyn, Sheilagh 185
 Doering, Harvey 173,174,175,235,236,261
 Dog Pound Creek 47
 Dole, Inez 25
 Dominion Land Agents 47
 Dominion Land Policy 4
 Dominy, Daisy 13
 Dominy, Ethel 13
 Dominy, Lydia 13
 Dominy, Mrs. 76,85, 86,87
 Dominy, Olive May 13
 Dominy, William 13,72
 Don's Men's Wear 130,260
 Double D (D&D) Antiques 104,193
 Dougan, Allan 66,96
 Dougan, Jim 185
 Doug's Drive In 181,184
 Doyle, Annie 131
 Doyle, Mrs. 71
 Doyle, Sid 219,233
 Doyle, Wayne 143
 Drainpipe Pete 71,72
 Drake 36
 Drama Club 131
 Dreger, Joyce 179
 Dubois Annie (Wales) 164
 Duchar, Sheila 249
 Duck, Mr. 86,177
 Ducks Unlimited 10
 Dundas, Dr. Kathryn 236
 Dunning, Hanna 7
 Dunwoody Orchestra 78,88,258
 Dunwoody, Nellie 162
 Dunwoody, Wally 257
 E.W. Miller School 16,44,97,98,99,140
 Eagle Hill 9,11,19
 Eagle Hill Curling Rink 146
 Eagle Hill Post Office 50
 Eagle Hill W.I. 70
 Eagle Point 20,44
 Eagle Point School 2,24,26,44,77,83,96,99,129,286
 Eagle Valley 8,9,10,11,24,48,129
 Eagle Valley School 44,129
 Eagle Valley W.I. 70,200
 Earles, Mrs. 71
 Early Childhood Services (ECS) 98,140,193,222
 East End Coffee Shop 144
 Eddy, Liana 179
 Eddy, Nevin 179
 Eddy, Pat & Myrna 179
 Edwards, Doug 240
 Edwards, Margaret 8
 Eidswold 106
 Eklund, Jim 153
 Elder 120
 Elder, Fred 10,21,62
 Elder, Jim 10,21
 Elder, William 21
 Eleanor Luxton Historical Foundation 34
 Elliot, A.L. 107
 Elliott, Elmer 66
 Elliott's Taxi 144
 Ellison, Dorothy 190
 Ellithope, Roy 289
 Ellithorpe Mail Truck 42

Ellithorpe, Alice (Junior) 41
 Ellithorpe, Alice 41,42,85,108,122,146,216,219,
 Ellithorpe, Bessie 18,59, 86,92,108,132,163,205,289
 Ellithorpe, Ernest 41,42,123,284
 Ellithorpe, Grace 42,284
 Ellithorpe, Lynn 289
 Ellithorpe, Margaret 42,284
 Ellithorpe, May 15,42
 Ellithorpe, Mrs. 70
 Ellithorpe, Nate 18,39,41,59,64,82,105,132,145,163, 218,
 219,283,289
 Ellithorpe, Nathan Smith 13,14,41,86
 Ellithorpe, Ralph 13,14,41,42,43,53,116,121,122
 Ellithorpe, Robert 41
 Ellithorpe, Rose 42,92,122,150,284
 Elmer the coyote 126
 Emergency Response Plan 243
 Emergency Response Team 250,251
 Emergency Services Society (EMS) 208,235,253
 English, Alf 142
 Erickson 27
 Erickson, Esther 20
 Erickson, Ivor 20
 Erickson, Olava 20
 Erickson, Pam 201
 Erickson, Shelley 152
 Error, Bob 150,151
 Eskesen Bros. 39
 Eskesen Family 161
 Eskesen, Agnete 124,125
 Eskesen, Anna 161
 Eskesen, Anne 124
 Eskesen, Art 39,147
 Eskesen, Darlene 124
 Eskesen, David 124
 Eskesen, Lyle 124
 Eskesen, Niels 39,124, 216
 Eskesen, Sharon 124
 Eskesen, Shirley 124
 Eskrick, Muriel 61,68,92,109,153,183,185,189,205,213,214
 Exxon-Mobil 156
 Fairless, Margaret 283
 Fallen Timber Creek 86
 Fallen Timber Four-Square Church 182
 Family & Community Support Services (FCSS) 99,260,
 261
 Federated Women's Institutes of Canada 70
 Ferguson, Doris 96
 Ferguson, Lawrence 283
 Ferris, Frank 21
 Ferris, H. 63
 Ferris, Henry 21
 Ferris, Mary Ellen 21
 Fifield, Frank 51
 First Female Flyer 261
 First Nations 211,255,256
 First Sidewalks 258
 Fisher, Dianne 236
 Fisher, Linda 230
 Fisher, Morris 233
 Fletcher, Arthur 7,8,10
 Fletcher, Frank 8
 Fletcher, Margaret 7
 Fletcher, Pearl 8,18
 Fletcher, Samuel 8
 Flood Control 140,169,231
 Flood of 1915 22,38,63
 Flood of 1943 134,135
 Flood of 1952 79,140,149
 Flood of 1965 79,140,153,195,196
 Flood of 2005 140,142,174,243,250,253
 Flying Farmers of Alberta 145
 Folland, Ed 182
 Folland, Edward 180
 Folland, Jack 180
 Folland, Trudy 178
 Food Rationing 91
 Foolen, Dr. Carla 236
 Foord, Roy 217
 Foothills Cowboy Association 73
 Foothills Lodge 7,138,184,232,260,278
 Foothills Terrace Condo 277
 Forest Heights Golf Club 200
 Forest Service & Parks Act 57
 Forestry Services 253
 Forget Me Not Flowers 51
 Forshner, Bob 200
 Fortis 106
 Fossam, John 214
 Fowler, Alice 41
 Fox, Jim 85
 Frazier 27
 Friedman, Betty 182
 Frizzell, Allan 71,142,145,162
 Fry, Dan 43
 Fry, Frank 16
 Fryling, Joyce 19
 Fur Dealers Record 84
 Further Education 115
 Galloway 203
 Gamble Family 184
 Gamble, Shirley 216
 Gamble, Stan 123, 216
 Gamble, Walter & Lilian 106
 Ganot, Carol 260
 Garnett, Betty 29
 Garnett, Frank 29
 Garnham, Shirley 259
 Garrington Ferry Crossing 214
 Garrington-Elkton 156
 Garrington-Viking 156
 Garriott, Elsie 165
 Gary Logan Memorial Rodeo 74
 Gastle, Jimmy 66,96,150

Gent, Joan 173
 Gent, Wayne 173
 Gibbons, Jim 12,101
 Gibbs, Gary 199
 Gieger, Melvin 11,119
 Gillings, Burt 243
 Girl Guides 68
 Girls World Champion Calf Roper 203
 Gleason, Gilbert 11,12
 Gleason, Lottie 11
 Gleason, Maud 11,12
 Gleeson, Paul 249
 Glenifer Lake 252
 Glenn, Mickey 151
 Glosky, Dolly 178
 Gochee, Hale 94,121,122,191
 Gochee, Harold 45
 Gochee, Janet 45
 Gochee, Jean 97,256
 Gochee, Orville 12,45
 Gochee, Ruth 45
 Golden, N.A. 92
 Golden, William 12
 Good Stoney, Chief Jacob 3
 Good, J.W. 92
 Goodland's Harness Shop 115
 Goodwin, Cheryl 261
 Goodwin, Mr. & Mrs. Bruce 146
 Gostola, Sharon 229
 Government of Alberta, 47
 Governor General's Caring Canadian Award 115
 Grace, Duane 235
 Graham, Gladys 24
 Graham, Harry 2,5,8,9,28,30,34,58
 Granberg, A.V. 161
 Grange, Edward 57
 Grange, Elsie 9,57
 Grant, John 27
 Graves, Jerry 146
 Graves, Thelma 261
 Great Depression 2,19,45,59,60,69,80,82
 Great West Lumber Company 2,9,11,36,37,38,40
 Green, Audrey 178
 Green, Marshall 44,62
 Green, Mr. & Mrs. 26
 Green, Ted 40
 Greenwood Bowling Centre 79
 Greenwood Country 113,129
 Greenwood Family Physicians 140,194,236,237
 Greenwood Neighbourhood Place 99,174,253
 Greenwood Park Campground 113,117,128,153,196,
 214, 216,251,252,260
 Greenwood, Lloyd 125
 Greenwood, Lyle 125,128
 Greenwood, Roy 125
 Greenwood, Russell Henry 125,126,129,153,195,260, 261
 Greenwood, William & Ella 125
 Greer, Germaine 182
 Grisswell, Roy 124
 Griswold 27
 Griswold, Harry 72
 Grivell, Marian 208
 Groom, Dave 151
 Guenther, Ken 203
 Guest, G.A. 149
 Gulbe, Anlize 24
 Gulbe, Charles 24
 Gulbe, Conrad (Jack) 23,24
 Gulbe, Emma 24
 Gulbe, Fred 24
 Gulbe, John 24
 Gulbe, Julia 24
 Gulbe, Lena 24
 Gulbe, Matilda 24
 Gulbe, Zette 24
 Gulf Canada 157
 Gunderson, Gwen 230
 Gwynn Electric 253
 Gwynn, Edna 253,259
 Gwynn, Les 253,259
 Gysbers, John 33
 Hagen Hall 2,51,65,107,116,118,123,150
 Hagen House 76,89
 Hagen Manor 56,80,140,259
 Hagen Store 13,18,51,52,53,54,77,81,82,93,96,119,182,
 257,284
 Hagen, Bertha 54,108
 Hagen, Elizabeth 49,52,54,55,70,105,108,128,182,286
 Hagen, N.T. 2,6,33,36,38,43,47,49,50,51,52,54,55,59, 61,
 62,70,72,73,75,82,93,105,107,108,128,135,140,145,169,
 170,177,182,257,272
 Hagen, Tilford 22,93,94,105,106,128,162
 Hall, Alice 111
 Halliday, Diana 247
 Halliday, Lonnie 247
 Halvorson, Ed 104,132,143,195,286
 Halvorson, Hazel 119
 Halvorson, Norman 214
 Halvorson, Olive 111
 Hammer 27
 Hansen, George 166,167
 Hansen, Vego 89
 Hanson, Don 29
 Hanson, Esther 29
 Hanson, Justin 10
 Hanson, Viola 10
 Happy Seniors Club 232,259
 Harder Family 39,82
 Harder, Ed 10,59
 Harmattan 10,60,61,87,99,119,131,184
 Harmattan East Field 155
 Harmattan Gas Plant 155
 Harmattan-Elkton Field 155
 Harmattan-Sundre Mutual Telephone Line 87,147

Harper, Irene 25
 Harper, Prime Minister Stephen 211
 Harrison, Allan 10
 Harrison, Earl 8,9,10
 Harrison, Henry 11
 Harrison, Martin 11
 Harrison, Oscar 11,66
 Harrison, Peter 11
 Harrison, S. Byron (Barney) 11
 Hart, Thomas 11,107
 Hartman, Dr. 116
 Harvest Moon Restaurant 77,258
 Harvey, (Doctor) 11,106
 Harvey, Tom 11,56
 Hassler, Arnold 112,190
 Hassler, Bea 112
 Hassler's Trailer Court 81
 Haug, Ferrell 184
 Haug, Jim 39,214,256
 Haug, Olaf & Ruby 106
 Haug, Rick 106
 Hayes, Elmer & Christine 177
 Haynes Hill 114
 Haynes, Guy 6,232
 Haynes, John 6
 Haynes, Millie 31,232,294
 Haynes, Virginia 6
 Hazel, Ivy 17
 Heaton, Arthur 6,29,58
 Heaton, Bessie 41,42,44,64,132
 Heaton, Jenny 42,64,70,131
 Heaton, Joe 59,64,72,131, 163,283,288,289
 Heaton, Mrs. Joe 70,288,289
 Hefford, Alf 26
 Helmer, Mrs. Wilfred 18
 Helmer, Rita 22
 Helmer, Wilfred 18, 22,128
 Helmer, Wilfred Mr. & Mrs 18
 Help for Victims of Family Violence 218, 261
 Henderson White, Gale 175,177
 Henderson, George Lewis 26
 Henderson, Jean 26
 Henderson, Marvin 235
 Hendry, Mary 96
 Hendry, Robert & Annie 129
 Hengen, Len 218
 Hengen, Les 243
 Henry, Audrey 203
 Henry, Marion 216,219
 Henze, Joe 164,165,175,177,218,247
 Henze, Karen 165
 Henze, Laurel 231
 Hermanson, August 21
 Hermanson, Hans 21,27
 Hermanson, Martha, 21
 Hewitt, M.J. 92
 Heyer, Roy 119
 Heyse, Josephine, 6
 Hickey 27
 High Tower 18E 157,261
 High Tower Drilling Company 155
 Highway #27 67,115,135,171,189,196,197,251
 Hilts, Georgina 201,235
 Hilts, Ron 218
 Hinson, Bill 184,274
 Hockey Draft Project 248
 Hodges, Charlie 59,61,62,93,144,145
 Hodges, Dorothy Rose 210
 Hodges, William & Dorothy 210
 Hoeyers, Tony 166,198,258
 Hoffner, Albert 199,218,221
 Hogg, Alex 27
 Hogg, John 27
 Hogg, Robert (Bob) 17,27
 Holdbrook, Emma 10
 Holdbrook, Lloyd 10
 Hole, Lois 115
 Hollick, Frances 180
 Home & School Committee 180
 Home Care 229,230
 Home Oil Company 154,155,199,221
 Hoodless, Adelaide 70
 Horton, Laura 174
 Horvath, Jim 160,189
 Hoszouski, Stanley 73
 House of Commons 210
 Howdy Drive In 147
 Howdy Wagon 201
 Howton, Charlie 14
 Howton, John 214
 Howton, Nellie 14
 Huber, Henry 101
 Hudec, Carol 240
 Hudson's Bay Company 30,56
 Hudson's Bay Oil & Gas 154,155
 Hudson's Bay-Garrington 156
 Hughes, Lorraine 215
 Huisman, Dr. Roy 259
 Huisman, Linda 259
 Humphreys, Marcia 33
 Humphries, Kevin 249
 Hungry Horse Ranch 195
 Hunt, Brooke 224,225
 Hunt, Dr. Terry 222,223,225,226,227,228,229
 Hunt, Helen 223
 Hunt, Marianne 225,227,228,229,235
 Hunt, Roy 223,224
 Hunt, Roy Junior 225,227,229
 Hunt, Sherry 223
 Hunt, Tara 224,225,229
 Hunter Valley 154,157
 Hunter, Ed 4,56
 Hupmobile 55
 Hutchinson, Gerry 256

Hyer 189
 Hysel, Grace 41
 Hysel, Steve 41
 Iebert, Bill 218
 IGA (Sobeys) 76,259,277,289
 Incorporation as a Village 182
 Incorporation as Town 140,142,156,166,196
 Indian Affairs Department 211
 Innes, Isabel 11
 Iorio, Salvatore 178
 Irvine, Dianne 234,236,237
 Irvine, Dr. Harland Stewart 206,234,236,237
 Irvine, Harlie & Joyce 236
 Irving, Kevin 249
 Isaac, Henry (Harry) 21
 J&J Tire Service 203
 J. Macleod Lumber 82,83
 Jack Davidson & Sons 87
 Jack's Diving Shop 182,246,258
 Jackson, Anne 180
 Jackson, Eric 73
 Jackson, Geoffrey 109
 Jackson, Helen 242
 Jackson, J.R. 92,109,118,147,184,257
 Jackson, Mary 109
 Jackson, Mrs. C.C. 132
 Jackson, Nichol 109,146,147,204
 Jackson, Richard 109
 Jackson, Sharon 53
 James River 10,12,20,23,184,250
 James River Bridge 19,23,51,223,225,251
 James River Hall 78,116
 James River Post Office 50,51
 James River Ranger Station, 57,214,215
 James River School 23,44,224
 James River Store 58,261
 Jamieson, Curf 283
 Jansen, John 27
 Jeannot, Edward 18,44,81,157
 Jeannot, Fay 18,81
 Jeannot, Fred 13,18,72,81,82
 Jeannot, Fred (Senior) 18,52,62,72,81,82,120,132,135,168, 283,285
 Jeannot, Margaret 18
 Jeannot, Pearl 285
 Jessop, Ruth 194
 Joachim, Frank 283
 Joe & Duck 177
 Johanneson, J.T. 36,39
 Johanneson, O.T. 36
 Johnson, Alex 143
 Johnson, Alf 163
 Johnson, Charlie 12
 Johnson, D.C. (Bud) 12,14
 Johnson, Florence 26
 Johnson, Frank 87
 Johnson, Harry 26
 Johnson, Hulda 11,26
 Johnson, Hy 163
 Johnson, Mary 12
 Johnson, Mrs. R 132
 Johnson, Mrs. Syvr 284
 Johnson, Oscar 27
 Johnson, Pat 19
 Johnson, Robert 182
 Johnson, Samuel 12
 Johnson, Verda 12
 Johnsrud 9
 Johnston, Alex 235
 Johnston, Alvina 148,168
 Johnston, Ann 115
 Johnston, Bob 115,266
 Johnston, Brenda 162
 Johnston, Dot 104,111,113,115,193,294
 Johnston, Elsie 115
 Johnston, Fran 115
 Johnston, Helen 115
 Johnston, Johnny 114,115,294
 Johnston, Kathy 115
 Johnston, Linda 115
 Johnston, Marion 115
 Johnston, Pat 27
 Johnston, Randy 266
 Johnston, Rick 216,219
 Johnston, Val 266
 Jones 27
 Jones, Bonnie 208,230
 Jones, Harry 122
 Jonker, Dr. Garland 237
 Jordon, Archbishop 187,189
 Judy the buffalo 127
 Just Travel 179
 Kallis, Ed 106
 Kallis, Henry 105
 Kearns, Cleave 199
 Keim, Elsie 23
 Kelly, Jeff & Dezna 106
 Kemna, Wolfgang 235
 Kemp, Jack 61
 Kesselring, Joseph 71,143
 Kibblewhite, Donna 180
 Kibblewhite, Maud 178
 Kidney Foundation 218
 Kids Internet Safety Alliance (KINSA) Hero of the Fight Award 211
 King, Dr. W.N. 118
 King, Rosemary 66
 Kingdom Hall 223
 King's Motel 251
 Kinsell, Pearl 26
 Kitchens Plain and Fancy 106
 Kjos, Isabelle 17
 Kjos, Ivor 17
 Klein, Premier Ralph 244,252

Klondike Gold Rush 57,85
 Knapman, Ellen 21
 Knott, Betty 9,52,73,85,87,122,128,182
 Knott, Ed 52,73,85,87,122,123,128,182
 Knott's Trading Post 41,43,73,77,85,86,87,88,89,121,
 122,128,129,144,148,150,181,182
 Kochinski, Brian 53
 Koenig, Marg 188
 Koenig, Mrs. 13,102
 Konkin, Dr. Jill 236
 Kostenuke, Ted 249
 Kovaks, Louis & Donna 132,169
 Kowalsky, Dr. Glen 236
 Kraft, Fred 45
 Krause Family 63
 Krepakevich, Jerry 112
 Kroker, Ray & Dawn 106
 Kuich, Ernest 67
 Kultjes, Jack 199
 Kutt, Richard 174
 Kvarnbere, Ernest 256
 Kyncl Trucking 240
 Kyncl, Bev 240
 Kyncl, J. 204
 Kyncl, Roger 240,247
 L.T. Sarles Real Estate 144
 Lachambre Ray, 184
 Lachambre, Joanne 184
 Ladd, Dick 87
 Ladies Hospital Auxiliary 61,80,103,104,115,140,200,
 201,202,213,235
 Lamb, Craig 179
 Lamb, Maggie 179
 Lambert, Isobel 199
 Landsbergen, Dr. Eugene 236
 Lange, Marty 249
 Langstaff, Rod 223
 Larkin, Margaret, 17
 Larkin, Todd 27
 Lastiwka, George 208,212
 Lawlor, Dave 118,
 Lawlor, Mrs. Edward 118,
 Lawlor, Rev. Edward 118,119,
 Lazzarotto, Viola 41
 Leacock, Karen 178
 Leask, Max 73
 Leatherdale Family 184
 Lee, Dave 49,54,177
 Lee, Pat 157
 Legion Cenotaph 115,117
 Lenz, Hobart & Joanne 227
 Leslie, Annalise 172
 Leslie, Christopher 172
 Leslie, Debra 172
 Leslie, Terry 172
 Leussink, George 104
 Leussink, Judy 53
 Lewis, Jack 94,246
 Light Horse Association 217
 Lindsay, Florence 132
 Lindsey, Earl 41
 Lindsey, Jean 41
 Linster, Fthr. Jim 217
 Lions for Sight 218
 Litten 23
 Little Beaver the horse 126
 Little Britches Rodeo 182
 Little Jack the donkey 126
 Little Red Deer River 22,28,33,36,47,48,49,50,51,63, 81,
 105,125,142,169,189,195,196,198,246,250,252,258,274
 Little, Sandy 165
 Livingston, H 27
 Lobely W.I. 70
 Lobley 15,51,184
 Lobley Post Office 50,51
 Lobley School 10,44
 Lobley, Fred 14,50,62
 Lobley, Helen 14
 Lobley, Jack 14
 Lobley, Jim 14
 Lobley, Joan 14
 Lockrem, R. 199,
 Loffland Brothers 182
 Logan, Audrey 22
 Logan, Bill 21
 Logan, Bob 21
 Logan, Charles 21
 Logan, Eric 22
 Logan, Gary 74
 Logan, Jack 21
 Logan, John 21
 Logan, Mary 21
 Logan, Rex 22,73
 Logan, Roy 22
 Lone Wolf 28
 Long Term Care (Continuing Care) 202,207
 Long, Clarence "Cougar" 151
 Long, Hanna Agnes Ethel 82
 Looten, Ken 231
 Lord Tennyson, Alfred 272
 Loree, Dr. Kelly 226
 Lost in the Woods 241
 Lough, Bill 234
 Lough, Lisa 261
 Loughheed Government 146,170
 Louisiana Pacific Canada Ltd. 238
 Love Feeds 124
 Lowry, Walt 94
 Luking, Beverly 225, 235
 Luking, Reinhardt 225
 Lund, Laurie 130
 Lund, Louis 94,129,130,166,,167,169
 Lund, Mary 55,69,129,130,169
 Lund, Michael 130

Lund, Mr. & Mrs. Andrew 129
 Lund, Norman 129,130,169
 Lund, Ty MLA 99,208
 Lund's Jewellery 76,129,144,169,181
 Lutheran Church 140,161,182
 Lutkekaus, George 71,124,143
 Luxton, Norman 29,32
 Lynn, Esther 11
 M&M Farming Co. 59,177
 MacBeth, Cliff 52,53,116,199
 MacBeth, Marian 52
 MacBeth, Peggy 199
 MacEwan, Lt.Gov Grant 214, 216
 Machan, Andrew 42
 Machan, Jack 42,45
 Machel, Dr. Bill 224
 Machel, Dr. Norman 227,228
 Machel, Erin 227,228
 MacKay, Peter 14
 MacKay, Robert 14
 MacKenzie, Lt. Matthew W 287
 Mackenzie, Mr.160
 Maclean, Rob 101
 MacLellan, Fthr. D.A. 187
 Macleod, Barbara 82
 Macleod, Christina 81,82,119
 Macleod, Christine 119
 Macleod, Colin 53,83,119,121,294
 Macleod, Donald 82
 Macleod, Ethel 83,107,120,229
 Macleod, Isabel 120,121,223
 Macleod, John (Jack) Junior 82,132
 Macleod, John 13,18,39,52,53,59,81,82,83,84,85,96,107,
 120,122,132,168,172,229,257
 Macleod, Karen 53
 Macleod, Murdoch 81,119
 Macleod, Murdoch Junior 82
 Macleod, Rod 18,53,59,61,81,82,83,103,119,120, 121,
 122,138,141,142,147,152,153,156,163,166,168,185,186,
 187,191,204,205,209,223,225,260
 MacRae, Tom 72
 Madsen, Haddie 131
 Mae West the donkey 126
 Main Avenue Mall 277
 Mallinson, Ada Alberta 20
 Mallinson, Bill 20
 Mallinson, John 20
 Mallinson, Laura Louise 20
 Mallinson, William John 20
 Maloff, Sandi 173
 Mann, Dr. 116
 Manning, Ernest 60
 Manning, Preston 60,171,183
 March on Didsbury 140,193,201,203,205
 Marcus Samuel Company 158
 Marek, Corrie 199
 Marek, John 199,207
 Marfleet, Chris 66, 79,100,101,152,214,221,231,284
 Marfleet, Evelyn 66,100,101
 Marfleet, Fred 100
 Marfleet, Janet 100
 Marfleet, Marjorie 100
 Markuson, J 10
 Marshall Wells Hardware 89,222,224,226
 Marshall, Duncan 48
 Martin 26
 Martin, Cecil 62
 Martin, Hettie 12
 Martin, Prime Minister Paul 211
 Martyn Motors 181
 Martyn, Bea 199
 Maskell, Mary-Lou 240
 Mason Exploration 256
 Mastin, Bob 210
 Matwychuck, Russ 103,104,170,199,214,215,219
 Mayfair Theatre 150
 Mayton-May City School 103
 McAllister, James 129,249
 McAmmond 119
 McCrae, Lt. Col. John MD 63
 McCurrough, Doreen 96
 McDonald, Annette 185
 McDougal Chapel 31
 McDougal Community Hall 6,31
 McDougal Flats 6,22,28,30,41,71
 McDougal Flats Church 118
 McDougal Flats School 6,31,44,77,96,114
 McDougal Home & School Association 6
 McDougall Homestead 50
 McDougall Crossing 17,47,50
 McDougall David (father of George) 30
 McDougall Days 73
 McDougall Memorial Church at Morley 34
 McDougall, Annie 32
 McDougall, David (Junior) 6,32,34
 McDougall, David Nawash 2,3,6,8,12,28,30,49,54,77,
 231,232,273
 McDougall, Elizabeth 30
 McDougall, George 30
 McDougall, Georgina Elizabeth 6,28,32
 McDougall, Jane Ellen 6,32
 McDougall, John 30
 McDougall/Hagen Bridge (Sundre Bridge) 51,196
 McFadden, Verna 262
 McGonigal, Carmen 79,80,196
 McGonigal, Jack 67,71,77,78,91,132,142,153,177,196,
 197,213
 McGonigal, Lillian 44,77,91,153,177,196,197,260,294
 McGonigal, Sheila 79,80,196
 McGonigal, William 77,87
 McGonigal, Stella 77,
 McInnes, Rev. Richard 119
 McIntosh, Alistair 180
 McIntosh, Jessie 232

McIntosh, John 19
 McIntyre, Bob 171,175,177,249
 McIntyre, H.D. 92
 McIntyre, Isobel 96
 McIntyre, Marilyn 171
 McIntyre, Mary 117
 McKay, Pete 72
 McKechnie Drugs 77,185,192,193, 216,258
 McKechnie, Archie 77,151,153,185,186,191,192,193,195,
 202,205,207,216,230,258
 McKechnie, Archie Junior 185
 McKechnie, Sheilagh 151,185,205,258
 McKechnie, Steven 185
 McKenzie Mr. 159
 McKenzie, Annie 30
 McKenzie, W. (Bill) 36
 McKeowen, Bob 27
 McKillop, Frances 76,177,179,294
 McKillop, Mrs. 71
 McKillop, Pete 73,177,179
 McKinnon, Christine 111,164
 McKintosh 27
 McKoewn, Robert J.W. (Bob) 17
 McLachlan, Dr. Gina 226
 McLaren, Reverend Martin 104,259
 McLeod, Roberta 249
 McMillan, Bob 27
 McMillan, Dan 19
 McMillan, Don 27
 McMurty Dr. William R. 22,224
 McMurty, Charles 22
 McMurty, David 22
 McMurty, Donald 22,283
 McMurty, Edna 22
 McMurty, Eleanor 22
 McMurty, Mary 22,224
 McNabb, Shari 131
 McNight, Harvey 69
 McRae, Fthr. 188,
 Meckleborg, Lena 15
 Medgaard 26
 Medicare 192
 Melvin Jones Fellowship Award 165
 Mennear, Tom 259,289
 Mennear, Walter 44,204
 Mercer, Ivan 132
 Mercury Vapour Lights 258
 Merry Westerners Girls Club 77
 Michaelchuck, Andy & Pauline 130,260
 Miessner House 75,76,81,181
 Mighty Mouse 201
 Mikal, Mrs. 102
 Mill, Florence 45
 Mill, Mrs. 70
 Millard, Annie 53
 Miller, Albert 15
 Miller, Anne 180
 Miller, Annie (Junior) 15
 Miller, Arthur 15,97
 Miller, Doris 15,66
 Miller, Dr. Chauncy Alvin 115,130,185,229
 Miller, Dusty 234
 Miller, Edith 15
 Miller, Edwin Walter 15,16,97
 Miller, Eileen 115,130,131
 Miller, Frank 15
 Miller, Herb 232
 Miller, Jim 103,213,214
 Miller, John 2, 115
 Miller, Judith 213,214
 Miller, Lila 15
 Miller, Lola 25
 Miller, Margaret 115
 Miller, Mildred 15
 Miller, Nettie 16
 Mills, Jay 243
 Mill, Marie 79
 Milne, A.A. 234
 Miquelon, P.A. 143
 Mitchell, Fred 124,132,180
 Mitchell, H. 132
 Mitchell, Roy 124
 Mjolsness 37,164
 Mjolsness Brothers, 39,141,177
 Mjolsness, Alfred (Uncle Alf) 13,94,150,163
 Mjolsness, Chester 39,59,141,166,167,177,180
 Mjolsness, Clara 9,11
 Mjolsness, Esther 13
 Mjolsness, J. 63
 Mjolsness, Jean (Aunt Jean) 13,94,129,130,163
 Mjolsness, Joe 13
 Mjolsness, John 13
 Mjolsness, John Junior 13
 Mjolsness, Joseph 13
 Mjolsness, Lettie 13
 Mjolsness, Lloyd 13,39,59
 Mjolsness, Lorenza 13
 Mjolsness, Louis 13, 39
 Mjolsness, Marion 45
 Mjolsness, Martin 13
 Mjolsness, Mary 13
 Mjolsness, Minnie 13,39
 Mjolsness, William 13
 Mobil Oil 155,248
 Modern Community Services & Groups 270
 Modern Sundre Businesses 266
 Moe, Elizabeth 9
 Moe, Mary 9
 Moe, Theodore 9,11
 Molesky, Don 247
 Monarch Oil 2,154
 Monigar, Augusta 14
 Montauf, Eugene O. 22
 Montreal Expo 127

Moonshine 159
 Moore, A.W. 106
 Moore, Gordon 215
 Moore, Helen 60
 Moore, Howard 73
 Moore, Marvin 145,146
 Moore, William 119
 Moorhead, Dr. William 193,206,213
 Moorhead, Jonathon 193
 Moorhead, Pam 193
 Moose Hunter 34
 Morck, Archie 161
 Morgan Field 146
 Morgan, "Pop" 14
 Morgan, Bill 14
 Morgan, Billy 59
 Morgan, Carole 61
 Morgan, Charlie 9,57,60
 Morgan, Clarice 9,57
 Morgan, Dave 9,57
 Morgan, Donald 59,150
 Morgan, Donna 59
 Morgan, Ed 61,95,231
 Morgan, Edith 57
 Morgan, Edwin 60,105
 Morgan, Elsie 57
 Morgan, Evelyn 60
 Morgan, Frank 14
 Morgan, Helen 102,104,201
 Morgan, Herb 61,145,146
 Morgan, Jeffrey 9,57,58
 Morgan, Joan 59
 Morgan, John (Jack) 9,39,56,57,58,60,62,72,82,87,94, 95, 102,105,132,144,145,146,150,163,164,165,166,177,185, 294
 Morgan, John 6,9,29,30,56,57,58,60,163
 Morgan, Johnny 9,57
 Morgan, Kitty 14
 Morgan, Rechter 150
 Morgan, Sharon 61
 Morgan, Sybil 9,57
 Morgan, Trevor 59,60,94,95,102,103,105,106,119,132,145, 152,153,185,187,202,204,205
 Morley 2,5,6,7,28,31,34,255,256
 Morleyville 30
 Morris, Albert 283
 Morris, Dale 169
 Morris, Janet 65,169,257
 Morris, Marjorie 169
 Morris, Reg 59,64,67,92,105,116,143,163,169,192,290
 Morris, Ron 65,169
 Morris, Susan 169
 Morris, William 64,169
 Morrison Contracting 44
 Morrison, Debbie 259
 Morrison, Dennis 259
 Moss, W.H. 108
 Mothers of Canada 117
 Mound 11,24,184
 Mound Cemetery 11
 Mound Post Office 50
 Mount View Health Unit (Sundre Community Health Centre) 208,229,230,231
 Mountain Aire Lodge 28
 Mountain View Cablevision 171
 Mountain View County 16,23,146,172,180,221,272
 Mountain View EMS 235
 Mountain View Pilots & Flying Association 146
 Mountain View Publishing 184
 Mountain View Regional Ambulance Services 236
 Mountain View School Division 147,165
 Municipal District of Mountain View 186
 Municipal District of Waterloo 15,23,24,25,97,141
 Municipal Planning Commission 198
 Municipality of Al, Norway 49
 Munksgaard, Bibianne 215
 Munns, Hugh 111,184,294
 Munns, Jackie 112
 Munns, Jody 112
 Munns, Lesley 111,113,128,184,294
 Murphy, Gerald 87,95,257
 Murphy, Mrs. 70
 Mushroom Factory 195
 Myers Creek 26
 Myers, George Mr. & Mrs.19
 National Geographic Magazine 11,29
 Natural Gas 138,140,186,187,258
 Nazarene Bible Camp 61,87,119
 Negropontes, Joan 29
 Negropontes, John 29
 Neilson, C. 204
 Neilson, Mrs. Pete 70
 Nelson, Aubrey Walter 108
 Nelson, Dick 10
 Nelson, Frank Ormiston, 77,78
 Nelson, Minnie 78
 Ness, Ole 37
 Neufeld, Elizabeth 124
 Neufeld, Peter 124
 Newman, Const. Bob 160,203
 Newman, Phil 231
 Nichol Jackson Livestock Dealer 144
 Niddrie 7,28
 Niddrie, Annie 7
 Niddrie, Fanny 7
 Niddrie, Fred 7
 Niddrie, John 7,12
 Niddrie, Verda 7,12
 Niddrie, William 7,12,21
 Niddrie, William Junior 7
 Niddrie/Fletcher Bridge 22,48,50,196
 Niddrie/Fletcher Crossing 47,49
 Niels Eskesen Reception Centre 125, 215
 Nielsen, Chris 62

Nielsen, Elaine 201
 Nielsen, Svend 247
 Nielson, Gladys 45,96
 Nitch Valley 184
 Noble, Jim 121
 Noble, Karen 121
 Noble, Roy & Muriel 121,162,
 Noble, Sandra 121
 Nordhus, Simon 36
 Norguard, Rudolph 67
 Norquay, Minnie 213
 North West Mounted Police 159
 Norton, Harry 132
 Norton, Nels 145
 Nova Natural Gas Pipeline 243
 Nutrition for Learning 115
 Odegard, E. 27
 Odegard Family 27
 Ogden, Arthur 174,175,198,222
 Ogen, Clarence 27
 Ogen, J.R. 27
 Oil & Gas Boom 171,272
 Oil & Gas Industry 138,154,163,243,280
 Oil Discovery 140,169,178,257
 Old Town Shop 262
 Olds Agricultural College 11,19,89,251
 Olds Gazette 66,184
 Olds High School 90
 Olds Hospital 192,204
 Olds Hotel 6,55,76
 Olds School Division 186
 Olds Veterinary Service 224
 Olson, Albert 20
 Olson, Esther 20
 Olson, George 20
 Olson, Helma 20
 Olson, Mildred 20
 Olsen, Reg 247,249
 Olson, Reuben 20,214
 Olsen, Sharon 247
 Olsen, Trena 20
 Olzenberg 23
 One in One Hundred Year Flood 231
 One in Two Hundred Year Flood 198
 Orr, Dr. Susan 236
 Otters Swim Club 247,262
 Outdoor Skating Rink 218,219,283
 Outlaws Bar & Grill 18,120,225,275
 Overguard, Berant 10
 Overguard, Frank 232
 Overguard, George 216,218,219
 Overguard, Joanne 180
 Overguard, John 10
 Overguard, Judy 180
 Overguard, Martin 10,195
 Packer, Jim 151,184,218
 Paige, Grace 14
 Pal the dog 126
 Palliative Care Association 115,202
 Pallison, Peter 63
 Panther #1 Oil Derek 262
 Parker, John 235
 Parker, Tyson 57
 Parkland Regional Library 131
 Parkwood Motor Inn 213,246
 Parliament Hill 210
 Patrawitz, Justine 23
 Patterson, Ann 109
 Payne, Peggy 52
 Payton, Donald 234
 Peak Theatre 233,234,237
 Pearce Family 134
 Pearce, Ernest 15
 Pearce, Ernie 41,42,62, 86,117,164,285
 Pearce, Fred 15
 Pearce, George 14,15
 Pearce, Grace 15
 Pearce, Hugh 2,15,52,56,60,85, 86,93,105,162
 Pearce, May 41
 Pearce, Mrs. Ernest 132
 Pearce, Stanley 15,93
 Pearce's Flowers 204
 Pearce's Garage 93,105,106
 Pearson, Terry 101
 Pekse 203,204
 Pekse, Belle 23
 Pekse, Dorothy 23
 Pekse, E. 61
 Pekse, Edward 23
 Pekse, Elaiane 23
 Pekse, Fred (Junior) 23
 Pekse, Fred 23
 Pekse, George 23
 Pekse, John 23
 Pekse, Karl 23
 Pekse, Mike 23
 Pekse, Rudolph 23
 Pekse, Sandra 23
 Pekse, Stella 23
 Pekse, Theodore 23
 Pender, Bill 27
 Pendle, A.W. 63
 Pendle, Edith 7
 Penny Agencies 203
 Pepper, Mabel 22
 Person Tax 141
 Person, Hilda 20
 Person, Jens 20
 Person, Marie 20
 Peter Bowden Drilling 182
 Peter the Rabbit 126
 Peters, Daryl 249
 Peters, Jim 220
 Peters, Sharon 249

Petersen, Don 224
 Peterson, Chris 88
 Peterson, Rhonda 261
 Petro-Canada 248
 Pharmasave 184,193
 Philipoff, Phil 218
 Phillips, Anna Mae 42
 Phillips, Barb 165
 Phillips, Boomer 163
 Phillips, Carmen 132
 Phillips, Clarence & Ella 132
 Phillips, Delores 42
 Phillips, Francis 66
 Phillips, Jack 132
 Phillips, John 42
 Phillips, Murray 42
 Phillips, Raymond 42
 Phillips, Vi 233
 Phillips, Will 222,231
 Pickersgill, Bernie 107
 Pier 21 110
 Pike Poles 36
 Pioneer Fair 213
 Pioneer Lodge 204
 Pioneer Place 140,259
 Pioneer Veterinary Services 18,120,223,224,225,226, 227
 Pioneer Village Museum 15,57,71,140,213,214, 216,279
 Plumb, Bert 18,19
 Plumb, Betty 19
 Pockar, Brian 221
 Policing 138,159,168
 Pollock, Oddetta 128
 Poncho 177
 Pool Plebiscite 247,248
 Potts, Jack 32
 Poulson 27
 Prairie Creek 251,252,253
 Prairie Creek Shopping Cntr. 121,130,184,237,259,277
 Prohibition 68,159
 Prosperity Certificates 80
 Prosychen, Ollie 203
 Protopapus, Harry 145
 Proudfoot, H.B. 4
 Psuji, Al 247
 Punch the buffalo 127
 Pusey, Chris 151
 Pusey, Corey 151
 Pusey, George 104,151,231,235
 Pusey, Kelly 151
 Pusey, Madonna 151
 Pusey, Tim 151
 Pushton, Dr. William Morley 30
 R&V Excavating 41
 R.C.A.F. 114
 Radio Shack 193,260
 Rainbow Woman 32
 Rankin, Bob 67,85,119,172,198,199,218,219,221,257,258
 Rankin, Martha 143,161,162, 172,258
 Rassmusen, Kai 199
 Rat Portage Lumber Company 38
 Ratcliff, Dennis 232,259
 Ratcliff, Melva 201, 208
 Ration Books 91,289
 Rattray, Fred 40
 Raven Fish Hatchery 10
 Ravenscroft 58
 RCMP Detachment 160,161,173,203,253
 Recreation Board 198,220,221,222,232,247,259
 Recreation Committee 212
 Red & White Meat Service 144
 Red & White Store 13,59,82,83,85, 86,120,121,122,135,
 141,144,152,168,258,260,264
 Red Deer Regional Planning Board 169,170,231
 Red Deer River 2,7,12,14,16,17,22,31,38,47,51,58,79,104,
 112,115,149,195,213,214,222,231,232,250,251,252, 253,
 254,255,260,274,284
 Red Deer River Festival 74,153,279
 Red Deer River Ranches 5,28,29, 34,41,78,91
 Red Deer River Ranger Station 22,182
 Red Head Service 144,181,186
 Red Lodge Post Office 50
 Reed, Bill 26
 Reed, Charlie 26
 Reed, John 27
 Reed, Rosabelle 10
 Reed, Scotty 57
 Reform Party of Canada 60,171,211
 Region of Hallingdal, Norway 49,50
 Reid, Emma 106
 Relief Camp 80
 Remembrance Day 63,118
 Remittance Men 35
 Revelstoke Lumber 39,40,59,82,212,222,238
 Reynolds, Alice 26
 Rhodes, Mrs. John 70
 Rice, Alta 12,
 Rice, Daisy 12
 Rice, Henry 12
 Rice, Susie 12
 Rice, Tillie 12
 Rice, William 12
 Rice, William Junior 12
 Richter, Victor E. 174,185
 Rindal, John 134
 Ringland, Deanna 124,179
 Ringland, Marty 124,179
 River Pig 36
 River Valley School 99,140
 Riverside RV Park 251
 Riveter Rosie 92
 Robbins, Clay 55
 Roberts, Karen 53
 Roberts, Lord 33
 Roberts, Ruth 178

Robertson, Janet 64
 Robinson McKenzie Lumber Co. Ltd. 36
 Robinson, Fthr. James 217
 Robinson, J.W. (Captain) 36
 Robinson, John & Kay 178
 Robinson-Berger, Cindy 152
 Robson, Ernie 114
 Rock Cut 9,41,81,134,154
 Rock, Anna Mae 96
 Rockwood 11
 Rockwood School 44,66,77,96
 Rocky Mountain Forest Reserve 57
 Rocky Mountain Safari Co. 195
 Rodeo & Race Committee 73,74,171,217
 Rodeo Grounds 74,171,212,230,273
 Rodeo Queen 73
 Rodes, John 87
 Roger & the Country Fever 221
 Rogers, Rev & Mrs. Warren 118
 Rogers, Roy 190
 Rolston, Ruth 70
 Romyn, Mart 94,163,204
 Romyn, Rena 71
 Roscoes 124
 Rose, Annette 102,103,215
 Rose, John & Emily 23
 Rosehill, Martin 23
 Rosehill, Natalie 23
 Rosevear, Rod 220,221
 Rosevear, Sandra 221
 Ross, Dr. Donovan 189,203,204,205,209,213
 Ross, Frances 96
 Ross, Frank 27
 Ross, William Theodore 11
 Rowles, Violet 125
 Rowntree, Dr. Carol 206,236
 Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) 140,159,161, 241, 242, 243
 Royal Purple 80,115,130,140,143,161,162, 232,234,259
 Runham, Violet 23
 Rural Fire Association 142
 Rushka, Belford 147,200,294
 Rushka, Clara 201,
 Rushka, Len 151,153,184,189,218,288
 Rushka, Luellea 147
 Russell 27
 Russell, Bob 18
 Russell, Carmen 18
 Russell, Margaret 18
 Russell, Ross 18
 Russell, Sylvan Ross 18
 Russell, Sylvia 18
 Russell, Violet 18
 S.T.A.R.S. 193, 208
 Samuel Samuel Company 158
 Samuel, Marcus (Junior) 158
 Samuel, Marcus 158
 Samuel, Samuel 158
 Sanberg, Donna 247
 Sande, Selma 15
 Sande, Bessie 15
 Sande, Hannah 15
 Sande, Irene 15,119
 Sande, Johanna 15
 Sande, Sigvart 15
 Sandlin, Arthur 25
 Sandlin, Burket 25
 Sandlin, Dezzie 25
 Sandlin, Emma 25
 Sandlin, Grace 25
 Sandlin, Henrietta 18,25
 Sandlin, Lee, 25
 Sandlin, Margaret 25
 Sandlin, Troy 25
 Sandlin, Violet 25
 Sandulak, Dan 132,149
 Sandulak, Ruth 71, 150
 Sarcee 3
 Sarles Family 115
 Sarles, Theron 125
 Sarsons, Don 124
 Saterswait, Ed 177
 Savage, George 118,119,132,142,166,168,169
 Savage, Thelma 118,119,132
 Savage, Wallace 138,141,174
 Save the Pool Committee 247
 Save the Snake 172,273
 Saw Log Drive 36
 Scarlett, Al 143
 Schaffer, Joe 75,181
 Schmidt, Charles 36
 Schmiemann, Dr. Uli 226
 Schneidmiller, Cheryl 40,
 Schneidmiller, Glenda 242
 Schneidmiller, Keith 40
 Schneider, Dean 249
 Schrader Creek 8
 Schrader, Albert 8
 Schrader, Bob 8
 Schrader, Ida 8
 Schrader, Jack 72
 Schrader, John 8
 Schrader, John Junior 8
 Schrader, Sandy 53
 Schrader, W. 61
 Schrader, Walter 8,157
 Scott, "Tamarack" 58
 Scott, Bill 171,184,235,261
 Scott, Gordon 163
 Scott, Mrs. 70
 Scout Hall 257
 Scouts 1st Jackson Troop 257
 Seaman, Phil 47
 Sears Catalogue Store 185,258

Seigfried, Alvie 10,26
 Seigfried, Charlene 10
 Seigfried, Charlie 10,26
 Seigfried, Frank 10,26,73,283
 Seigfried, Franklin 10
 Seigfried, Myrtle 10
 Seigfried, Olive 10
 Seigfried, Rosabelle 26
 Seigfried, Roy 10
 Sellers, Jim 149
 Semaka, Julia 23
 Seniors Recreation Centre (West Country Centre)
 140,232,233,259
 Severns, Edna 180
 Severns, Jake 180,257
 Severns, Jean 258
 Severns, Leone 180,182
 Severns, Lorraine 180
 Sew Perfect 185,258
 Sewage Treatment Plant 260
 Shaw, Tom 53,186
 Sheel-Shantz Sulphur 156
 Sheets, Alberta 44
 Sheets, Chris 93,162,
 Sheets, Ellis 76,162, 177
 Sheets, Francis 42
 Sheets, Lum 72,131
 Sheets, Mervin 42
 Sheets, Myrtle 42
 Sheets, Thelma 76,162,177
 Shell Canada 156,171,243,248
 Shell Caroline Gas Plant 138,156,158,171,244
 Shell Oil 154,155
 Shell South Compressor Station 157
 Shepherd, Peter 132
 Short Stop Service 144
 Short-Stop Foods 76,89,223,224,253
 Show & Shine Car Show 279
 Shute, Andre & Miriam 106
 Shute, Graham 106
 Shyback, Cindy 261
 Sibble, Bert 22
 Siddon, A. 19
 Silver Lassie the dog 126
 Silvester, Joe 20
 Silvester, W.H. 141,166,174
 Simmington, Sharon 234
 Singleton, Dan 183
 Slang, Ernie 145
 Slyzen, Steve 132
 Smalley, C.J. 106
 Smallpox Flats 255
 Smart's Trophies 152,240,246
 Smee, David 243
 Smith, Albert 6
 Smith, Allie 41
 Smith, Alta 6
 Smith, Art 118, 160,232
 Smith, Arvid 24
 Smith, August 24
 Smith, Bernard 6
 Smith, Bill 218
 Smith, Charlie 24
 Smith, Fred 24
 Smith, Glen 249
 Smith, Hanna 6
 Smith, Hazel 201
 Smith, Howard 6, 216
 Smith, J.W. (Jack) 6,31
 Smith, Jack 24
 Smith, Julia 24
 Smith, Ken & Hazel 151,231
 Smith, Lena 24
 Smith, Maria Lydia 21
 Smith, Millie 6
 Smith, Neil 24
 Smith, Nicola 259
 Smith, Rick 249
 Smith, Sam 6
 Smith, Sandy 241
 Smith, Tom 6,36
 Smith, Walter 24
 Smith, Warren 24
 Smith, Winnifred 59
 Smith's Corner 24
 Smith's Creek 24
 Snake Hill 73,74,149,172,210,220,255,256,257,273
 Snarud, John 119
 Snow, Arthur 19
 Snow, Daisy 19
 Snyder, Harry (Colonel) 29,30,78,91
 Snyder, Mrs. Harry 78
 Social Credit Party 60,80
 SOLEX Gas Processing Corp. 156
 Somers, Bill 232
 Sonny Boy the Jersey steer 126
 Souster, Dr. Tim 206
 Spanish Influenza Pandemic 2
 Spence, Dolly 213,214
 Spence, Pat 213,214
 Spencer, Bessie 25
 Spencer, Esther 12
 Spencer, Jessie 11
 Spinney, Mabel 77,88
 Spinney, Minnie 77
 SPOG Neighbors Day 241,244,245
 Spotlight on Sundre 113
 Spray Lakes Sawmill 13,39,141,177,215
 Spurrell, Candice 208
 Spyker, Mrs. 206
 St. Louis, Leo 213
 Stampa, Dr. Leonora 194,237
 Stampede Board 212
 Stampede Grounds 49

Stanley, Mary 22
Stauffer Sawmill 88
Stave Church 107
Steen, Howard 72,82
Steen, Susie 70,131
Steinem, Gloria 182
Stevenson, Gerald 45
Stevenson, Steve 71, 79,142
Stewart, Roy 89,224
Stewart, Ruby 89,224
Stiles, Stephen MLA 145,260,261
Stinky the skunk 126
Stock Market Crash (1929) 58
Stone, Lonestar 131
Stoney Nation 3,30,31,32,255,256
Stovel, C.C. 92
Street Dance 258
Street Numbers 258
Strohmeier, Walter & Edna 106
Strome, Wilfred 6
Stubbs, Jim 71
Stud Auction 247,249
Student Observer 66
Sturrock, Don 42
Suffrage Movement 69
Suicide Hill 86
Sunberry School 44
Sunberry Valley 12,17,18,25,26
Sundown in Sundre 153
Sundre & District Agricultural Society 74,140,216,217, 219, 220,240,241,246,248,273
Sundre & District Aquatic Society 248,249
Sundre & District Chamber of Commerce 68,73,120, 121,148,152,153,169,171,181,183,185,191,204,207,212, 232,235,243,248,259,260
Sundre & District Fire Committee 143
Sundre & District Fire Department 130,138,140,142,143, 165, 169,180,235,253
Sundre & District Historical Society 80,115,125,140,213, 214,215,218,256
Sundre & District Senior Citizens Club 232
Sundre (concrete span) Bridge) 140,169,196,290
Sundre (ironspan)Bridge 140,169,181,196,290
Sundre 4H Beef Club 140,179,180,217
Sundre Airport 59,62,140,144,145,170,261
Sundre Ambulance Service 170,234,236
Sundre Ambulance Station 140,142,235
Sundre Arena 140,170,172,203,215,216,218,219, 220,222, 259,260,273
Sundre Arts Centre 172,234,273
Sundre Bakery 132,144,169
Sundre Ball Diamonds 170,212,220
Sundre Band 132,133
Sundre Bellringers 259
Sundre Bottle Depot 116
Sundre Bridge 9,13,14,38,47,48,66,86,89,93,103,106,117, 149,160,161,171,219,231,251,258,262,284
Sundre Bus Lines 181
Sundre Café 144,265
Sundre Catholic Church 13,71,104,130,182,187,188, 189,201
Sundre Cemetery 6,68
Sundre Choralaires 198,258
Sundre Christian Womens Club 61
Sundre Community Centre 99,131,139,140,273,278
Sundre Community Learning Centre 98
Sundre Community Van 217,259
Sundre Compressor Station 154
Sundre Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses 223
Sundre Contracting 39,59,82,96,129,144,145,170,238, 264
Sundre Creamery 2,63,64,65,89,92,116,144,169,218,283
Sundre Creamery Board 108
Sundre Elementary/Junior High School 98
Sundre Elks Club 80,140,142,144,150,162,169,179,185, 201,213,232,234,240
Sundre Elks Hall 103,130,144,161,190,221,234,246,259
Sundre Elks Lodge 71,115,143
Sundre Farm & Ranch Supply 124
Sundre Farmers Market 217,241
Sundre Feed Mill 89,124,125,143
Sundre Field 154,155
Sundre Figure Skating Club 220
Sundre Fire Hall 121,131,141,142,168,235,273
Sundre Fish Ponds 140
Sundre Flag 171,261
Sundre Flower Shoppe 75,76
Sundre Flying Club 59,145,146
Sundre Forest Products 238,239
Sundre Garage 93,162
Sundre Garden Club 217,245,246
Sundre General Hospital District #51 205
Sundre General Store 41,43,82,181
Sundre Girl's Club 131
Sundre Glass & Mirror 150,152,161,275
Sundre Golf Club 140,169,189,199,200
Sundre Golf Course 140,198,199,252,278
Sundre Gospel Centre 106
Sundre Hardware 83, 144,218
Sundre High School 96,205,210
Sundre High School (1983) 98,170,171,172,261,261
Sundre Hi-Light 66,150
Sundre Hill 9,134,135,178,186,199,274
Sundre Home Guard 132
Sundre Hospital Board 61,103,115,121,174,207,209, 235, 236
Sundre Hospital 9,61,73,79,103,121,128,140,153,166, 171,172,185,189,191,192,193,194,198,201,203,204,205, 206,207,208,209,210,212,213,229,230,235,236,266,273
Sundre Hotel 59,65,94,114,129,132,140,143,144,159, 162,164,165,177,181,185,218,222,257,264,276,286
Sundre Hotel Café 151,178
Sundre Investments 59,132,163
Sundre Jail 121
Sundre Junior-Senior High School 1959 98

Sundre Kwik Wash 182,186
 Sundre Legion 63,73,80,115,116,160,179,232,234
 Sundre Legion Hall 42,117,118,223
 Sundre Legion Ladies Auxiliary 115,116,117
 Sundre Library 2,71,99,130,131,140,143,167,168,180,188,204,217
 Sundre Lioness Club 218
 Sundre Lions Club 140,165,218,232,259,260
 Sundre Liquor Store 152,213
 Sundre Livestock & Farm Supply Ltd. 124,276
 Sundre Lumber Co. 39,59,82,166,183,184,238
 Sundre Meat Market 75,76,204
 Sundre Medical Clinic 192,193, 216
 Sundre Men's Wear 90,93,105,162
 Sundre Ministerial Association 180,256
 Sundre Minor Hockey Club 218,220
 Sundre Motors 59,60,61,62,93,94,95,103,105,117,141,142,144,145,148,163,169,170,181,191,192,205,253,260,264,276,278
 Sundre Museum 128,173,215,246,282
 Sundre Mutual Telephone Company 147,148
 Sundre New and Used 179
 Sundre News Advertiser 67,183
 Sundre News Advisor 66,182
 Sundre Petroleum Operators Group (SPOG) 153,158,243,244,245,253
 Sundre Play School 99,188
 Sundre Plaza 51,193,236
 Sundre Pony Club 217
 Sundre Pool Hall 85,92,132,164,180
 Sundre Post Office 2,49,51,52,53
 Sundre Power Co-operative Association 85,105,141,168, 187
 Sundre Pro Rodeo 73,74,174,279
 Sundre Rod & Gun Club 258
 Sundre Rodeo 72,240,257
 Sundre Rodeo Committee 18,74
 Sundre Rodeo Parade 73,95,153, 245,266,279
 Sundre Round Up 66,68,113,140,148,152,153,181,182,183,189,190,193,205,220,231,249,253,274
 Sundre Round Up Masthead 184
 Sundre Rural School Board 13
 Sundre Sales & Service 172,186
 Sundre School Choir 259
 Sundre School Fair 69,71,143, 216,246
 Sundre Schools 69,96,108,150,214,219,221,231,234,241,247,248,287
 Sundre Sea Cadets 287
 Sundre Search & Rescue (SAR) 140,217,241,242,243, 253
 Sundre Shoe Shop 144
 Sundre Sports Club 64,92,132
 Sundre Stampede 19,29,69,74,87
 Sundre Stampede Association 56,72,73
 Sundre Star 67,182,183
 Sundre Statistics 271
 Sundre Stock Yard 182
 Sundre Student's Union 66,248
 Sundre Sub Aquatic Club 258
 Sundre Tabernacle 182
 Sundre Tennis Courts 170,230
 Sundre Theatre 65,104,140,144,149,150,151,152
 Sundre Thrift Shop 61,102,103,104,188,201,204
 Sundre Tirecraft 106
 Sundre Town Council 56,103,130,140,142,160,161,170,173,177,187,207,210,211,212,219,221,231,232,235,247,253,258,272
 Sundre Town Office 80,121,141,142,148,160,168,236,250,251,252,253,272,278
 Sundre Trade Fair 153
 Sundre Trail System 172
 Sundre Transfer Station 254
 Sundre Transport 41,42,182,285
 Sundre United Church 2,56,85,92,96,106,108,116,118,171,182,206,217,256,257,264,276,287
 Sundre United Church Board 118
 Sundre Variety & Gift Store (V&G) 90,105,130,259
 Sundre Visitor Information Centre 86,153
 Sundre Weather Station 261
 Sundre West Country Centre 7,234
 Sundre Winter Carnival 279
 Sundre Women's Institute 2,13,68,70,71,87,140,143,213, 234
 Sundre, Norway 49,50,107
 Sundre-it-is 184
 Sundre's 100th Birthday 140
 Sunpine Fire 238,239
 Sunpine Forest Products 40,82,139,238,248
 Sunshine Bus 259
 Sunshine Club 232,259
 Sunshine Day Care 140
 Super Sunday 153
 Svee, Margaret 75
 Svee, Mrs. Olaf 75
 Svee, Olaf 75
 Swamp Donkey's Pub 184
 Swan Hills-Beaver Lake Formation 156
 Swan Hills-Beaver Lake Formation 156,157
 Swimming Pool (Aquaplex) 139,172,216,218,246,248,249,250,273
 Swimming Pool Fund Raising Committee 248,249
 Sylvester, Harold 145,257
 Tall Timber Campground 86
 Taperette Hair Salon 260
 Tateson, Nettie 15
 Taylor LP Gas 156
 Taylor, Allan 52
 Taylor, Elizabeth 167,174
 Taylor, George 175,177,252
 Taylor, Peter 221
 Temple, Glory 26
 Temple, Peter 18
 Temple, Phil 151,190
 Temple, Stella 26
 Tennaco 155
 Tetreault, Roger 243

The Gold Tree 130,260
 The Hiding Place 61
 The Somme 62
 The Wagon Wheel 178
 The White Spot 178
 Thomas, Alf 67,71,83,132,166,204,258
 Thomas, Alice 41
 Thomas, Jack 41
 Thompson, Bill 41
 Thompson, Claus 210
 Thompson, Dennis 101,210,211
 Thompson, Dorothy 101,170,211,212
 Thompson, Dr. Jim 236
 Thompson, Lola 210
 Thompson, Margaret 41
 Thompson, Mike 53
 Thompson, Myron 101,140,170,172,210,211,212,216,
 219,220,221,222,231,232,234,261
 Thompson, Myron D. 101,170,210
 Thompson, Nita 109
 Thompson, R.N. (M.P.) 213
 Thompson, Robert & Violet 183
 Tibby the badger 126
 TKM 40
 Todd, Veronica 17
 Tomlinson, Greta 19
 Tony's Barber Shop 166,182
 Toole, Ray 23
 Toone, Barry 172
 Toone, George 172,218
 Toone, Patricia 172,175,177,256
 Toone, Roy 172,186,288
 Tooth, Frank 119
 Tooth, Laura 11
 Totem Golf 200
 Town of Sundre 73,99,113,130,138,145,153,168,173,197,
 213,216,219,220,222,230,240,241,246,247,257,260
 Town Shop 140,272
 Traffic Lights 273
 Trans Alta Utilities 261
 Trans Canada Highway 169
 Trottier, Dale 145
 True Auction Services 232
 Turman, Fred 258
 Turnbull, Ken 145
 Tutor, Edward 9
 Two Beer Policy 164
 Tyler, Evelyn 128
 United Church Choir 109
 United Church Hall 204
 United Farm Women of Alberta 69
 Universal Health Care 192
 Upham, Neil 208
 Upton, Garth 208
 V & E 123
 V&S Options 104
 V.E. Day 92,93
 V.E. Day Parade 93,137
 Valens, Jack 90,259
 Valens, Pat 90,101,259
 Valley Jewellers 130
 Valley Service 144
 Valdez Brothers Service 144
 Vanderzwan, Anne 169
 Vanderzwan, Neil 56,118,132,153,169,171,172,191,195,
 198,221,222,235,236,260,260,290
 Vans, Everett 164
 Vennard Family 115
 Vennard, Bob 123,124
 Vennard, Evelyn 86,122,
 Vennard, Everett 41,59,86,92,122,123,124,146,150,163,
 225
 Vennard, F, 180
 Vennard, Levi & Astessie 122
 Vennard, Ray 122
 Vennard, Rose 41,122,123,124,146,150,225,294
 Vennard's Store 41,121,123,124,144, 216,275
 Venturers Club 260
 Veteran Homecoming Park 117
 VHQ Entertainment 119
 Vicki's Beauty Salon 144
 Village Council 142,159
 Village Hall 141,168
 Village of Sundre 138,139,140,141,197,246,257
 Vimy Ridge 14,21,62,63
 Vinson, Jim 150
 Vinson, Ruth 183
 Vinson, Tom 283
 Vintage Square 152,276
 Vockeroth, Cathy 234
 Vollmin, Bob 45
 Vollmin, Chester 45
 Vollmin, Syd 45,145,146,261
 Volunteens 201
 Von Smithe Mrs. 22
 Von Smithe, Aberhart 22,
 Vooy's, Arie 143,150,152,
 Vooy's, Gary 219,294
 Vye, Ed 67,
 Vye's Views 67,
 Wagner, Ida 18,
 Waldner, Dr. Lorne 226,
 Waldroff, Les & Donna 240,
 Waldroff, Mabel 232,
 Walker, Ken 180,
 Walk-In Clinic 237,
 Wallace, J.N.4,
 Wallace, Tom 143,
 Walle, Thor 118,
 Walton, T.A. 174,
 War Brides 110,
 Ward 8,
 Warkentin, Gayle 145,
 Warren, Dr. Michelle 206,236,

Warren, Dr. Peter 206
 Warren, Dr. Rob 237,
 Warwick, Patricia 171,206
 Waterside Schoolhouse 161,
 Watt, Sandy 234,
 Webb Financial 246,
 Webb, Frances 177,
 Webb, Joyce 177,
 Webb, Stanley 177,
 Weins, Bert 94,
 Weins, Ted 132,
 Weir, Ann Kathrine 99,
 Weir, Gertrude 99,100,
 Weir, Helen 99,
 Weir, John 99,100,129,132,141,204,285
 Weir, John David 99,
 Welch, Ruth 33,
 Weldwood of Canada 238,
 Wells, Corp. L. 160,203,
 Wells, Jim 25,
 Wells, Lawrence & Blanche 128,
 Wesley 255,
 West Fraser Timber Co. Ltd. 239,
 West Park Motel 190,
 West, Delmar 182,
 West, Dick 128,198,
 West, Jerry 182,
 Western College of Veterinary Medicine 224,
 Weston, David E 18,
 Weston, Ed 27,
 Westward Ho 9,10,13,14,27,41,64,108,156,183,228, 246,
 252,254,258,
 Westward Ho Campground 251,
 Westward Ho Field 155,
 Westward Ho Post Office 50,
 Westward Ho School 187,188,
 Westward Ho W.I. 70,
 Wheatcroft, Ruth 18,
 White Goose Restaurant 181,
 White Water Whirlers 259,
 White, Christopher 191,
 White, Dorothy 104,190,191,193,194,205,294
 White, Dr. Alan 140,153,185,190,191,193,194,195,205,
 206, 207,213, 216,217,229,230,231,236,237,258,
 White, Finlay & Susan 223,
 White, Philippa 191,
 White, Simon 191,
 White, Susan 191,193,
 Whitesell, John Senior 214,
 Whitesell, John 142,143,235,
 Wiens, Barb & Allan 245,
 Wiens, Ted 66,96,
 Wigham, Doreen 96,
 Wigham, E. 92,
 Wild Rose Constituency 140,171,211,212,
 Wild Rose Court 131, 259,
 Wild, Mike 67,
 Wilkins, F.W. 4,
 Williams, Garianne (Mogck) 240,
 Williams, J.E. 92,
 Williams, Tim 240,
 Willis, Dave & Dale 106,
 Willsie, Tom 180,
 Wilson Arch Co. 219,
 Wilson, Bill 123,
 Wilson, Dr. Michael 226,
 Wilson, G 27,
 Wiltsie, Ralph 199,
 Windish, Walter 178,
 Winger, Earl 26,
 Winger, Lillian 26,
 Winter of 1906/1907 14,32,
 Winter, Flora (Junior) 21,
 Winter, Flora 20,
 Winter, Isaac 20,
 Winter, Judith 21,
 Winter, MacDonald (Mac) 21,
 Winter, William (Bill) 21,
 Wiper, Jack 147,148,
 Wirsig, Claus 66,
 Wirsig, Oscar 147,
 Wismer, Mr. 108,
 Wombold, Ann 100,
 Wombold, Sidney 100,
 Women's Christian Temperance Union 68,
 Women's Institute Hall 64,70,71,104,107,130,141,161,
 187,201,214,275
 Woodstock, Reg 283
 Work World 171,
 World War One 2,12,14,19,21,24,62,63,69,70,85,110, 184,
 World War Two 2,15,19,46,52,53,59,73,79,80,91,92,110,
 113,119,121,144,163,169,190,233
 Wray, Dr. 213
 Wright, Ragna 161,
 Wrigley, Diana 121,240,260,294
 Wrigley, Walt 121,240,260,294
 Wrigley's Mayfair Foods 217,260,
 Wudel, Don 233,
 Ya Ha Tinda Ranch 86,
 Yancy, Orville 72,
 Yett, Mr. 86,
 Yewell, H 14,63,
 Young 27,
 Youth Drop-in Centre 147,
 Youth Museum 215,
 Ypres 62,
 Zimmerman Family 66,
 Zimmerman, Barb 151,152,
 Zimmerman, Mike 151,152,234,260,
 Zim's Mini Mart 51,66,225,275

C4645